

# GREEK, ROMAN, AND BYZANTINE STUDIES

Founded by

JOHN J. BILITZ

## Editorial Board

<i>Senior Editor</i>	WILLIAM H. WILLIS, <i>The University of Mississippi</i>
<i>Editor for Greek Studies</i>	WILLIAM M. CALDER III, <i>Columbia University</i>
<i>Editor for Roman Studies</i>	PHILLIP H. DE LACY, <i>Washington University</i>
<i>Editor for Byzantine Studies</i>	DENO J. GEANAKOPLOS, <i>University of Illinois</i>
<i>Assistant Editor for Byzantine Studies</i>	SPEROS VRYONIS, JR., <i>University of California at Los Angeles</i>
<i>Indexer and Circulation Manager</i>	DOROTHY ROUNDS, <i>Cambridge, Massachusetts</i>
<i>Assistant to the Editor</i>	DECOURSEY FALES, JR., <i>Cambridge, Massachusetts</i>

## Advisory Board

PETER CHARANIS, <i>Rutgers University</i>
STERLING DOW, <i>Harvard University</i>
GLANVILLE DOWNEY, <i>Dumbarton Oaks, Harvard University</i>
JAMES H. OLIVER, <i>The Johns Hopkins University</i>
BROOKS OTIS, <i>Stanford University</i>
GEORGE H. WILLIAMS, <i>Harvard Divinity School</i>

Volume 3      1960      Numbers 2 & 3

UNIVERSITY, MISSISSIPPI ✓ CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PRINTED BY THE  
EATON PRESS, WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS, U. S. A.

## CONTENTS

The Name of Penelope . . . . .	WILLIAM WHALLON	57
The Concept of Prāotēs in Plutarch's <i>Lives</i> . . . . .	HUBERT MARTIN JR	65
The Concept of <i>Ex-Opere-Operato</i> Efficacy in the Fathers as an Evidence of Magic in Early Christianity . . . . .	E. G. WELTIN	74
A Shipwreck on the Dalmatian Coast and Some Gold Coins of Romanus III Argyrus . . . . .	MICHAEL METCALF	101
Erasmus and the Aldine Academy of Venice: A Neglected Chapter in the Transmission of Graeco-Byzantine Learning to the West . . . . .	DENO J. GEANAKOPLOS	107
The Genesis of an Oral Heroic Poem . . . . .	JAMES A. NOTOPOULOS	135



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2024

# The Name of Penelope

William Whallon

THE TALE OF ODYSSEUS' RETURN would have been very different if his wife had not been known as Penelope. For the Homeric poems came from an age of aural etymologizing,<sup>1</sup> the minstrels who perfected the poems throughout centuries of storytelling found proper nouns as meaningful as common nouns, and certain phonetic associations at first fortuitous became inevitable. Shakespeare's Juliet by any other name than Capulet would have had greater fortune in love, but Penelope's name is even more vitally related to her biography.

Now it is an obvious fact that a language built upon a rather small number of phonemes is almost necessarily going to include homonyms, and correspondence of sound alone is insufficient to indicate words as cognate. In present-day Norwegian, for example, the word for the duck, *Anda* (where the dental stop is no longer pronounced), does not compel any kind of dark reminiscence of the girl named Anna, and likewise the duck  $\pi\eta\nu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omega\psi$  need not be thought germane to Penelope,<sup>2</sup> unless in the similarity there is a remnant from the dawn of time, when in a beast epic Penelope might actually have been a duck, Athene an owl, Hera a heifer, and Apollo a wolf. In the Homeric poems we possess, the  $\pi\eta\nu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omega\psi$  and Penelope have no semantic relationship, and the coincidence of identical syllables is unimportant. Another word, however, has been commonly observed as apparently akin to the name of Penelope, and may have had a crucial bearing upon her career: this

<sup>1</sup>Most notably in *Od.* 1.62 and 19.407-9, which are discussed in a stimulating manner by G. E. Dimock, Jr., "The Name of Odysseus," *The Hudson Review* 9 (1956) 52-70. Many provocative examples are listed by L. Ph. Rank, *Etymologiseering en verwante verschijnselen bij Homerus* (Assen 1951).

<sup>2</sup>Weighty evidence that "Penelope is derived from penelops" was assembled by J. A. K. Thomson, *Studies in the Odyssey* (Oxford 1914) 48. Granting the thesis, one still cannot find the *pēnelops* in the *Odyssey*.

word is *πήνη*, the woof of the web. Penelope may have gained her name from her manufacture of cloth; more probably her name suggested the suitable métier.

There are other clothiers in the *Odyssey*: Helen spins, Arete spins, the Naiads weave at looms of stone, and Hephaestus (who is a bigamist himself with Charis and Aphrodite) forges a web to ensnare his laughter-loving wife and her adulterer. But Penelope is the Arachne of the poem, the clothier *par excellence*, the one whose epic role is most dominated by the occupation. It may be true that there was little a woman of her class could do besides weave, yet it is also true that her work constantly prompts observance of the secondary import of several words that refer to the textile craft, and thus the lines that explain the origin of the *Iliad* apply even more to the origin of the *Odyssey* (*Od.* 8.579-80):

τὸν δὲ θεοὶ μὲν τεῦχαν, ἐπεκλώσαντο δ' ὅλεθρον  
ἀνθρώποις, ἵνα ἦστι καὶ ἐστομένοισιν ἀοιδὴ.

A recurring passage tells how Penelope put off remarriage by urging that she should first weave a *φᾶρος* to be a shroud for Laertes, and by undoing at night all her labor of the day. Antinous pronounces the passage in placing before Telemachus the charge that Penelope is wily and has not kept to the terms of the arrangement by which she had asked the suitors to wait only so long (*Od.* 2.96-102):

Κοῦροι, ἔμοὶ μνηστῆρες, ἐπεὶ φάνε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,  
μίμνετ' ἐπειγόμενοι τὸν ἐμὸν γάμον, εἰς δὲ κε φᾶρος  
ἐκτελέσω, μή μοι μεταμώνια νήματ' ὅληται,  
Λαέρτηι ἥρωι ταφήιον, εἰς δέτε κέν μιν  
μοῖρ' ὀλοὴ καθέλησι τανηλεγέος θανάτου,  
μή τίς μοι κατὰ δῆμον Ἀχαιαδῶν νεμεσήσῃ,  
αἴ κεν ἄτερ σπείρουν κῆται πολλὰ κτεατίσσας.

Now, at the beginning of the *Odyssey*, the moral obligation of Penelope is clear enough to Antinous, whether or not it is of concern to her. The suitors do not apply coercion on the sole argument that the *φᾶρος* is completed; yet it is precisely because of Penelope's failure to continue her weaving indefinitely that little further delay appears possible.

When Penelope much later tells the beggarly stranger who is

actually Odysseus how she contrived to remain faithful to her husband, she uses the actual speech Antinous had recounted earlier. And in a few words of exceptional significance she prefaches the long stereotype with an ascription of her plot to the divinity who inspired her (*Od.* 19.137-40):

οἱ δὲ γάμον σπεύδουσιν ἐγὼ δὲ δόλοις τολυπεύω.  
φᾶρος μέν μοι πρῶτον ἐνέπνευσε φρεσὶ δαίμων,  
στησαμένη μέγαν ἵστον, ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ὑφαίνειν,  
λεπτὸν καὶ περίμετρον·

There is no doubt who the divinity was: Antinous (*Od.* 2.116-8) saw clearly that it was the goddess of both handiwork and mental adroitness. Thus advised, Penelope is fittingly described as wise; like Chaucer's "hende Nicholas" and directly contrary to Shakespeare's "honest Iago," the familiar formula *περίφρων Πηγελόπεια* contains an accurate guide to the character of the person denominated.<sup>3</sup> Penelope is a weaver, a weaver of wiles; she is a Clotho who spins many destinies; and her phrase *ἐγὼ δὲ δόλοις τολυπεύω* is a specimen of an exceedingly rare kind of expression, for the literal meaning is equivalent to the metaphor. The word *τολυπεύω* in a further sense bears reference to Odysseus, who is beyond all other men the *πολύτλας*, and Odysseus selects *τολυπεύω* for the vocabulary of his remonstrance to continue the siege at Troy (*Il.* 14.86). While he endures, the distaff side of his family winds off her scheme and creates a *φᾶρος* which becomes the tangible evidence of her continence.

The whole process of weaving seems handled by Athene with perfect timing, since exactly when the work is completed, as the shade of Amphimedon relates (*Od.* 24.149), Odysseus is brought to Ithaca. The narrative of Antinous had fixed the completion of the shroud at a month or more earlier, but in the retrospect of Amphimedon the comparatively brief additional time of indecision may appear insignificant.<sup>4</sup> The disparity between the two accounts is not crucial: Odysseus returns just when the shroud is finished or

<sup>3</sup>Such formulas are not necessarily meaningless merely because they provide for metrical needs, since the evolution in an oral tradition permitted the shaping and adapting of the epic language: see George M. Calhoun, *Homeric Repetitions*, CPCP 12 (1933) 25.

<sup>4</sup>For an important discussion of Odysseus' return when the shroud was completed, see W. J. Woodhouse, *The Composition of Homer's Odyssey* (Oxford 1930) 70-1.

just when, because it is finished, Penelope is under the greatest duress. The long-awaited remarriage is then the reunion consummated after Odysseus has proved his right to his bed. When this thoroughgoing alteration is effected, the *φᾶπος ταφήιον* for Laertes has outlasted its intended need and passes from attention.

But immediately prior to the trial of the bed, another *φᾶπος* has come to dominate the *mise en scène*: it is the robe of the investiture that accompanies Odysseus' transformation by Athene (*Od.* 23.153-62). The metamorphosis would have been incomplete if he had been left ragged, since there is much to indicate that Penelope, unlike Argus, recognizes him largely from his apparel. When she wishes to authenticate a report that he was seen on the way to Troy, she asks first of the raiment he wore (*Od.* 19.218), and even after the trial of the bow and its sequel he finds it difficult to make himself known to her because he is filthy and stands in tatters (*Od.* 23.115). The core of the *Odyssey* is the execution of the suitors; although the other labors may be as hazardous, none is so integral or so indispensable to the poem; and one of the most crucial aspects of the execution is that it is accomplished by Odysseus in disguise. True, his feeling of ascendancy compels him to reveal himself before slaying more than a single suitor (just as it compels him to reveal himself before parting from the blinded Polyphemus). Yet disguise is his chief weapon in surmounting this final obstacle that impedes him from the rule in his house (as it is in laying the preparations for the assault of the hollow horse upon Troy [*Od.* 4.244-58]), and the task is finally completed when he receives the *φᾶπος* that is the proper accoutrement for the trial of the bed.

In the course of the travails that repeatedly strip him and render him destitute, Odysseus gains respites with Circe, Calypso and Nausicaa, and each sojourn may partially preview his return to Penelope. Thus the lines that describe his transformation by Athene in Ithaca carry striking associative power when they describe his transformation in Scheria (*Od.* 6.230-5), and the final investiture itself is to a degree prefigured when Circe, Calypso or Nausicaa causes him to be provided with clothing, although it admittedly seems excessive that the subjects of Alcinous should give

him *φάρεα* each and every one. Telemachus receives a *φᾶρος* from Polycaste when he visits Nestor (*Od.* 3.467), and Laertes receives a cloak when his rightful position is restored (*Od.* 24.367), but it is the epic hero himself who is clothed ceremoniously in a garment that represents the completion of the trial of the bow and prepares him for his ultimate test.

Mystery, ambiguity and symbolism belong to the literature of implication, which depends upon obscurity rather than upon perspicuity and rigorous demonstrability. The *psyche* rather than the *nous* is the judge of its truth. Among others Dante has given his commentators much trouble by saying less than he means, by presenting possibilities rather than conclusions. From the ninth circle of Hell, for example, Ugolino de' Gherardeschi describes how he was starved in a Pisan tower with his children, who marked his suffering and offered him their own flesh, until one by one the children died, and his hunger overmastered his grief (*Inferno* 33.75): *più che il dolor potè il digiuno*. The simple sense of these last words is that soon the count died of starvation himself, but there is a grisly and terrifying second sense, which Hugo in the celebrated preface to "Cromwell" thought the main one. Such a style as this belonged to Aeschylus foremost among the authors of classical antiquity. It is almost precisely opposed to the usual Homeric style. Yet there are undeniable elements of a mysterious suggestiveness that surround the web woven by Penelope and the robe in which Odysseus is clothed.

Throughout Ibsen's "Rosmersholm" Rebekka West knits a white shawl. It is just finished when she goes to drown herself, and to the perceptive eye it has become a shroud.<sup>5</sup> Such visual effects are the property of drama and beyond the scope of epic, but the attentive and perceptive ear of the Homeric auditor makes analogous identifications. In the *Odyssey* the two chief *φάρεα* coalesce. The shroud becomes the robe cast about the man of an unparalleled hold on life. The epithet *ταφήμον* then stands as the crown of the poem's duplicity, for the *φᾶρος* could not be put to a use less funereal. Hector's donning of the armor of Achilles must be made explicit to be grasped at all, because it is unprepared for and appears the

<sup>5</sup>John Northam, *Ibsen's Dramatic Method* (London 1953) 126.

result of momentary temerity. But the transvestitism of the *Odyssey* is palpable although implicit, and even seems to have been accomplished with perfect premeditation by Athene. Odysseus' return just when or not long after the weaving was completed thus has its point. He could not have come much later, lest Penelope should have been compelled to choose among the suitors; and he could not have come earlier, either, lest the robe should have been unfinished. In a poem governed not by chance or fate but by one infallibly successful divinity, who has planned not only Penelope's delaying stratagem but also Odysseus' vengeance (*Od.* 5.23-4), simple coincidence is not to be regarded. There is, of course, no reason to suppose that Penelope foresaw the transvestitism from the onset of the suitors' importunity; clearly enough she brought her work to a close unwillingly. And it cannot be gainsaid that considerable orderliness derives from Odysseus' arrival in the nick of time. But the Homeric method does not clutter the stage with unused properties, or leave a pocket of gold unmined.

The epic audience heard the poems many times and knew them, could recall the entire corpus of lays when hearing but a single episode, and could carp at inconsistencies and applaud resolved complexities. As the *Odyssey* gained its final shape, no object was likely to spur the imagination more than the *φάπος* woven by Penelope. That it should serve merely to pass the time would be idle; that it should economically achieve a splendid end would seemingly be requisite. Once the minstrel found that end, he could fashion his material to make it all of a piece and could even provide the delectation of presentiment. Telemachus' assertion that Penelope ought to tend to her loom and leave the mastery of affairs to him (*Od.* 1.356-9 and 21.350-3), in lines that with neat modifications appear in the *Iliad* but were possibly created for the special situation in the *Odyssey*, may conceivably therefore have appeared to the audience something besides a reproof that might contain the desire for Penelope to end her three-years' chore and accept a husband. Athene's brief loan of a *φάπος* to Odysseus when she chose to reveal him to Telemachus could also have had a special appropriateness. But there is much more that prepares for the salient closing investiture.

In the guise of an unkempt wayfarer Odysseus genially deceives Eumeus by making a pact from which he can expect to gain a cloak and a tunic (*Od.* 14.395-7). Penelope promises to clothe the stranger in a cloak and a tunic if he speaks truly (*Od.* 17.549-50) or if he strings the bow (*Od.* 21.338-9). With gratuitous but affectionate concern Eurykleia wishes to bring a cloak and a tunic for her master after he has slain the suitors (*Od.* 22.487). And the striking thing about these three situations is that the cloak which is strongly anticipated lies neglected and does not appear. Borrowed cloaks warm Odysseus' sleep (*Od.* 14.520 and 20.143), but they clearly do not satisfy the expectation that he will receive a cloak when he is attired amid the music of the dance and the wedding-feast.

The Homeric poems are formulaic to a degree seldom approached in world literature<sup>6</sup> but not to the degree we have been led to believe. The body of Patroclus is not preserved (*Il.* 19.38-9) in the same way as the body of Hector is preserved (*Il.* 23.186-7). The gathering of wood to consume the body of Patroclus (*Il.* 23.110ff.) has little in common with the gathering of wood to consume the body of Hector (*Il.* 24.782-7), although the two pyres are quenched in the same manner (*Il.* 23.250 and 24.791). The transformation of Odysseus before Nausicaa is the same as the transformation just prior to the trial of the bed, but differs from the transformation of Odysseus before Telemachus (*Od.* 16.173-6). The poems show a remarkable economy of language, but could show more, and the selection of a word or a phrase in preference to established competitors may be significant. Trained to sing in the traditional idiom of his guild, the minstrel shaped his matter to fit what the limited number of possible expressions before him permitted, but his choice among the possibilities was entirely one

<sup>6</sup>Milman Parry's collaborator in collecting the formulaic Jugoslav epic lays is currently engaged in publishing and discussing them, and in an early article leads from the blind poet of one oral tradition to the blind poet of another: Albert B. Lord, "Homer, Parry, and Huso," *AJA* 69 (1948) 34-44. Passages from the earliest documents in our own mother-tongue have in addition been studied through the use of one of Parry's schemata with interesting results: see Francis P. Magoun, Jr., "Oral-Formulaic Character of Anglo-Saxon Narrative Poetry," *Speculum* 28 (1953) 446-67. A wide and valuable account of formulas in several languages is given by Sir Maurice Bowra, *Heroic Poetry* (London 1952) 215-53.

of free will. The regular formula to be expected for the investiture of Odysseus preceding the trial of the bed is

ἀμφὶ δέ μιν χλαῖναν καλὰν βάλεν ἥδε χιτῶνα.

Here are provided the cloak and the tunic that Eurycleia seemed anxious to fetch. But instead of the cloak he receives a robe, in a slightly different formula (*Od.* 23.155):

ἀμφὶ δέ μιν φᾶρος καλὸν βάλεν ἥδε χιτῶνα.

Why did the minstrel reject *χλαῖναν* for *φᾶρος*, the cloak for the robe? Because consciously or unconsciously, his mind dwelt on the *φᾶρος* woven by Penelope. By design or fortunate accident, a crucial part of the *Odyssey* was made to consist of a noble travesty.

That the robe was more precious than the cloak is not an important consideration, because Eurycleia would not have suggested an unsuitable garment for the man who had been her care since the day of his birth. That *φᾶρος* is the word of greater metrical utility or the more usual word cannot be urged, because it is of indifferent convenience and greater rarity. That the robes worn by Calypso and Telemachus have nothing to do with Penelope or Odysseus hardly diminishes an effect of singular impressiveness. In spite of the suitors' insolent prodigality, the ancestral mansion almost beyond question held robes in abundance, and there is no entirely logical method for describing the one Eurynome placed about the shoulders of Odysseus. Yet only a single robe is in any way familiar, only a single one indeed has the sheen of the sun or the moon (*Od.* 24.148), and this is the one the imagination immediately apprehends. Since it was but recently finished, it may well have lain at the top of the stack.

Once the shroud for Laertes is identified with the robe of Odysseus, the *Odyssey* stands in a curious and handsome contrast to the *Iliad*. For the ransom given by Priam contains a store of fine garments, and from them Achilles separates two robes and a tunic to enshroud the body of Hector. The difference between the tragic solemnity of the *Iliad* and the eudaemonic optimism of the *Odyssey* is well epitomized by this difference between the alterations of purpose to which the *φάρεα* are turned.

# The Concept of *Prāotēs* in Plutarch's *Lives*

*Hubert Martin, Jr.*

THIS STUDY seeks to define Plutarch's concept of *prāotēs* by a close examination of the contexts in which the term occurs in the *Lives*.<sup>1</sup> We are concerned not only with its apt translation, though that is important, but even more with the basic notion underlying particular uses of the word and the nuances which depend upon this basic notion. The question arises as to what extent Plutarch's usage was influenced by the vocabulary of his sources. Although the problem is aggravated by the fact that in most instances we do not have the sources for comparison, I have attempted to demonstrate elsewhere that Plutarch was relatively independent of his source in choice of words.<sup>2</sup> The fact that the various categories of usage we recognize for *prāotēs* are represented by at least several and often by many examples from different *Lives* lends support to this conclusion.<sup>3</sup>

Let us begin by examining several passages in which *prāotēs* refers not to a moral quality but rather to a physical characteristic. Plutarch opens the fifth chapter of his *Life of Pericles* with a remark about Pericles' admiration for his adviser, the philosopher Anaxagoras of Clazomenae:

<sup>1</sup>The study is based entirely on the *Lives*. For those references from the *Moralia*, cited in the footnotes, and for several additional references from the *Lives*, also cited in the footnotes, the writer is indebted to Professor Phillip De Lacy.

<sup>2</sup>Hubert Martin, Jr., "The Concept of *Philanthrōpia* in Plutarch's *Lives*," *AJP*, a forthcoming issue. Hartmut Erbse's convincing discussion of Plutarch's originality in handling his source material, "Die Bedeutung der Synkrisis in den Parallelbiographien Plutarchs," *Hermes* 84 (1957) 398-424, points, furthermore, to the *a priori* assumption that he was also independent of his source in his choice of vocabulary.

<sup>3</sup>The forthcoming monograph (XIX) of the American Philological Association by Helmbold and O'Neil, *Plutarch's Quotations*, may shed considerable light on this problem. This article, however, was submitted before the appearance of the monograph.

This man Pericles extravagantly admired, and being gradually filled full of the so-called higher philosophy and elevated speculation, he not only had, as it seems, a spirit that was solemn and a discourse that was lofty and free from plebeian and reckless effrontery, but also a composure of countenance that never relaxed into laughter, a gentleness of carriage (*πραότης πορείας*) and cast of attire that suffered no emotion to disturb it while he was speaking, a modulation of voice that was far from boisterous, and many similar characteristics which struck all his hearers with wondering amazement.<sup>4</sup>

We find a similar usage of *prāotēs* in *TG* 2.2, where Plutarch in contrasting the Gracchi states that Tiberius was *πρᾶος* and *καταστηματικός* in appearance and gait, while Gaius was *ἐντονος* and *σφοδρός*.<sup>5</sup> The difference between the brothers is then illustrated by their behavior on the rostra. Tiberius stood *κοσμίως*<sup>6</sup> in one place, but Gaius was the first Roman to pull his toga off his shoulder as he spoke, just as Cleon was the first Athenian demagogue to pull aside his mantle and strike his thigh.

One's general impression from these two passages, where *prāotēs* is employed to describe the physical appearance of Pericles and Tiberius, is that these men possessed great dignity in expression and carriage, and an inner self-restraint responsible for their outward dignity. So also in the case of the description of Fabius Maximus in *Fab.* 17.7. When all of the other Romans were overwhelmed by grief and confusion as a result of the disaster at Cannae, "he alone went through the city with a dignified walk and a composed countenance and a courteous<sup>7</sup> greeting" (*πράω βαδίσματι καὶ προσώπῳ καθεστῶτι καὶ φιλανθρώπῳ προσαγορεύσει*). And Philopoemen looks his executioner "calmly" (*πράως*) in the face as he speaks his last words (*Phil.* 20.3).<sup>8</sup>

In several other pertinent instances the adverb *πράως* describes a physical action. In *Cat. Mi.* 63 Plutarch tells of the demands made

<sup>4</sup>Tr. Perrin, Loeb Classical Library.

<sup>5</sup>For *πραότης* contrasted with *σφοδρότης*, see *TG* 2.5–6; *Cleom.* 1.4; *Alex.* 4.8; *Pyrrh.* 8.8; *Tim.* 3.4. (In references of this nature the adjectival and adverbial forms will be included under the heading of the nouns.)

<sup>6</sup>For *πρᾶος* and *κόσμιος*, see *Ages.* 20.7; *Comp. Pel. Marc.* 3.2; *Agis* 14.3. Cf. *Cim.* 5.5 (*πραότης* and *ἀφέλεια*).

<sup>7</sup>For *φιλάνθρωπος* in the sense of "courteous" or "pleasant" see Martin *op. cit.* (*supra* n.2). *πραότης* and *φιλανθρωπία* often appear together in the *Lives* (*Rom.* 7.5; *Cat. Mi.* 23.1; *Agis* 20.5; *Fab.* 22.8; *Pyrrh.* 11.8; *Arist.* 23.1; *Phil.* 3.1; *Cat. Ma.* 5.5; *Galb.* 1.3).

<sup>8</sup>*πραότης* is used to describe the calmness of water in *Moralia* 981 C. The adjective also is applied to things in *Alc.* 16.4.

of Cato by the defeated Republican cavalry that had survived Thapsus. Cato is trying to organize Utica to resist a siege, but the leaders of the horsemen fear that the Phoenician inhabitants of the city will go over to Caesar. The leaders, therefore, refuse to bring their men into the city to participate in the defense unless Cato will drive out or kill all of the regular inhabitants. (In 63.3 Plutarch characterizes these proposals as *οὐ μέτρια*). Cato's reaction and reply are described in 63.6: "Cato thought that these demands were terribly cruel (*ἄγρια*) and savage (*βάρβαρα*), but he replied *πράως* that he would take counsel with the three hundred." There is a pointed contrast between Cato's inward feeling and his outward reaction, for, though he is repelled by the brutality of the request, he nevertheless manages to reply *πράως* — that is, without anger or excitement but rather with calmness and self-control.

A similar usage of the adverb is to be found in *Arat.* 40.4, where Aratus cleverly extricates himself from a plot laid against him by the Corinthians, who had summoned him to the temple of Apollo. "He appeared leading his horse himself, as though he were not distrustful or suspicious, and, when many of the Corinthians jumped up and persisted in rebuking and accusing him, with his countenance and speech somehow well composed (*εὖ πως καθεστῶτι τῷ προσώπῳ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ*) he calmly (*πράως*) told them to sit down and to stop standing there shouting in confusion . . ." There is a strong notion here of deliberate self-restraint in *πράως*; for Aratus is really just putting on an act, since he is fully aware of the plot and is only contriving his own escape, which is recounted in the subsequent narrative.<sup>9</sup>

In the discussion so far, inner character for the most part has only been intimated or reflected in the *prāotēs* of countenance, movement, and voice. Let us now, however, investigate uses of the term for a purely moral concept. In *Alex.* 4.8 Plutarch discusses the *sōphrosynē*<sup>10</sup> of the young Alexander: "While he was still a boy,

<sup>9</sup>The adverb is used with a similar force to describe the manner in which a person speaks in *Cic.* 31.4 and *TG* 19.4.

<sup>10</sup>For a survey of the position of *σωφροσύνη* in Greek ethics see Eduard Schwartz, *Ethik der Griechen* (Stuttgart 1951), especially 51ff., 208ff. In this passage from the *Life of Alexander*, as we might expect, *σωφροσύνη* appears to be the master-virtue, to which *πραότης* stands in a subordinate position. (In *Demetr.* 1.4 *σωφροσύνη*, *δικαιοσύνη*, and

his *sōphrosynē* was revealed by the fact that he was generally violent (*ράγδαιον*) and impetuous (*φερόμενον σφοδρῶς*) but that in the case of bodily pleasures he was not easily aroused (*δυσκίνητον*) and partook of such things with great restraint (*μετὰ πολλῆς πραότητος*). . . ." The intimate connection between *sōphrosynē* and *prāotēs*<sup>11</sup> in this selection is apparent and serves to emphasize the notion of self-control, which is perhaps the basic idea contained in every usage of *prāotēs*.

This basic notion is revealed again in *Cor.* 21.1-3, where Plutarch describes how Coriolanus reacted to his condemnation to perpetual banishment. Having concluded the previous chapter with the statement that after the voting there was no need of dress or other marks of distinction to tell one class from another, for those who rejoiced were plebeians and those who were distressed were patricians, Plutarch then turns to Coriolanus himself: "Marcius himself was the exception, for he was neither daunted nor dejected; and he was also composed (*καθεστηκώς*) in appearance and movement, so that among all of his comforters he alone seemed to be unsympathetic to himself. His reaction, however, was not governed by reason and self-restraint (*ὑπὸ λογισμοῦ καὶ πραότητος*) nor by his bearing with moderation (*τῷ φέρειν μετρίως*) his misfortune; instead he was numbed by wrath and resentment (*ὑπ' ὄργῆς καὶ βαρυφροσύνης*) . . . And Marcius revealed very soon by his actions that this was his disposition." Plutarch is careful here to stress that Coriolanus' apparent physical composure was not what it appeared to be, that it was not the product of *logismos* and *prāotēs*. This example of *prāotēs* is, in effect, the exception that proves the rule. The presence of *logismos*,<sup>12</sup> furthermore, is instructive for it emphasizes that

φρόνησις are referred to as the *τελεώταται* of all the *τέχναι*.) Any guess, however, as to their exact relationship would be hazardous without a thorough examination of Plutarch's usage of *σωφροσύνη*. In view of Dihle's contention that Plutarch's ethical theory is derived ultimately from Aristotle and the Peripatetics (see *infra* in text) and of the coincidences between Plutarch's usage of *πραότης* and the definition of the term given by Aristotle (see *infra* nn. 13, 21, 22), it is perhaps worth pointing out that in this passage Plutarch connects *σωφροσύνη* especially with the control of bodily pleasures, just as Aristotle limits the term to the control of bodily pleasures, in particular those of touch and taste (*Eth. Nic.* III. 10, 1118<sup>a</sup> 1-1118<sup>b</sup> 8).

<sup>11</sup>Aristotle in several instances places *σώφρων* and *πρᾶος* in juxtaposition (*Eth. Nic.* I.13, 1103<sup>a</sup> 8; II.1, 1103<sup>b</sup> 19; V.1, 1129<sup>b</sup> 21-22).

<sup>12</sup>In *Cor.* 15.4 τὸ πρᾶον is the product of *λόγος* and *παιδεῖα* (see *infra* in text for a discussion of the passage).

*prāotēs* contains a certain intellectual aspect: *logismos* and *prāotēs* are contrasted with the emotional qualities *orgē*<sup>13</sup> and *baryphrosynē*. The intellectual association of *prāotēs* is stressed again in Plutarch's remark that Cato the Elder was said to have borne the death of his son *πράως* and *φιλοσόφως* (*Cat. Ma.* 24.10).<sup>14</sup>

Although we saw that a deficiency of *prāotēs* in the character of Coriolanus was in large measure responsible for his treasonable actions against his country, nevertheless in our previous discussion we examined the quality primarily as a state of character within the individual. Let us now turn to those instances in which the second party is more prominent. We see what might happen when a man allows his *thymos* to overpower his *prāotēs* in *Fab.* 9.1, where Plutarch describes the reaction of the Roman people to the threat of the dictator Fabius Maximus to return to camp and punish his subordinate Minucius, who had disobeyed orders and successfully engaged a small portion of Hannibal's army: *καὶ τοῦ Φαβίου τὸν θυμὸν ἐκ πολλῆς πραότητος κεκυνημένον φόντο βαρὺν εἶναι καὶ δυσπαραίτητον*. They feared that if Fabius lost control over his *thymos* he would be severe and implacable in his treatment of the offender.<sup>15</sup> *Prāotēs* is, furthermore, associated with legality and contrasted with cruelty, violence, and tyranny in several passages. Lysander's constitutional reforms were accomplished *πραότερον καὶ νομιμώτερον* than were those of Sulla; for Lysander achieved them by persuasion, not by arms, nor did he completely subvert the constitution; he merely revised the manner of appointing the kings (*Comp. Lys. Sull.* 2.1). In *Pel.* 26.2-3 Pelopidas attempted to transform Alexander of Pherae from a tyrant into a moderate ruler who governed by law (*ἐπειράτο καὶ ποιεῖν ἐκ τυράννου πρᾶον ἄρχοντα τοῖς Θεσσαλοῖς καὶ νόμιμον*). "But since the man was incurably brutish and full of savageness, and since

<sup>13</sup>For *πραότης* in contrast to *όργη* or as a quality controlling it, see *TG* 2.5-6; *Fab.* 7.7; *Pyrrh.* 8.8; 23.3; *Oth.* 16.6. It is interesting that Aristotle defines *πραότης* as *μεσότης περὶ ὀργᾶς*, its excess and deficiency being respectively *όργαλτης τις* and *ἀοργητὴ τις* (*Eth. Nic.* IV.5, 1125<sup>b</sup>26-1126<sup>b</sup>10). Cf. *Eth. Nic.* II.1, 1103<sup>b</sup>17-20; II.7, 1108<sup>a</sup>4-9; II.9, 1109<sup>b</sup>14-17; V.1, 1129<sup>b</sup>19-23. The section in the *Rhetorica* contrasting *όργη* and *πραότης* (B.2-3, 1380<sup>a</sup>5-1380<sup>b</sup>34) begins with the statement that *τὸ δργίκεσθαι* and *όργη* are the opposites of *τὸ πραύνεσθαι* and *πραότης* respectively.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. *Alex.* 40.2 (*πράως καὶ φιλοσόφως*); *Dem.* 22.3 (*ἀλύπως* and *πράως*).

<sup>15</sup>For the conflict between *πραότης* and *θυμός*, see *Cleom.* 1.4; *Dio* 39.4; *TG* 25; *Cor.* 21.1-2; *Pyrrh.* 8.8.

there was much denunciation of his licentiousness and greed, Pelopidas became harsh and severe with him, whereupon he ran away with his guards.”<sup>16</sup> And Plutarch observes (*Comp. Dio Brut.* 2.2) that no savage or tyrannical (*τυραννικόν*) deed resulted from Caesar’s rule but that he came as *πραότατος ιατρός* at a time when a monarchy was needed.<sup>17</sup>

So far our examination of this last aspect of *prāotēs* has been principally from a negative point of view.<sup>18</sup> Let us turn to the positive. In *Alex.* 13.3 Plutarch remarks that it is said that the destruction of Thebes often caused Alexander distress and made him *πραότερον* to many people thereafter. A convenient translation for *πραότερον* in this context is “more forbearing;” the full implication of the term is that Alexander exercised a stricter control over his *thymos* and therefore treated others with greater forbearance. The relation between conqueror and his defeated opponent is again present in *Ant.* 83.6, where Cleopatra tells Augustus that she had held back from her treasures some small gifts for Octavia and Livia, in order that through their intercession she would find her conqueror “gracious and more forbearing” (*ἴλεώ σου τύχοιμι καὶ πραοτέρον*). A similar usage occurs in the last sentence of the *Life of Pyrrhus*: Antigonus Gonatas treated the friends of his dead opponent Pyrrhus *πράως*.<sup>19</sup> In usages of this sort the translation “forbearing,” I feel, conveys the proper shade of meaning. The common rendering “gentle” leaves upon the reader the impression that *πρᾶος* depicts a spontaneous, emotional quality; but, as we have previously seen, this is not so, for *prāotēs* is the product of conscious effort; in fact, it means that its possessor is restraining his purely emotional reaction and is substituting for it another, more rational one.

In several instances the adjective is conveniently rendered by “lenient.” Aemilius Paulus (*Aem.* 3.6) did not campaign for a sec-

<sup>16</sup>Tr. Perrin, Loeb Classical Library.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. *Phoc.* 29.5 (*πράως καὶ νομίμως*); *Pyrrh.* 23.3 (*ἐπιεικῶς* and *πράως* contrasted with *δεσποτικῶς* and *πρὸς δργήν*).

<sup>18</sup>Cf. Aristotle’s remark (*Eth. Nic.* V.1, 1129<sup>b</sup>19–23): “And the law bids us do both the acts of a brave man (e.g. not to desert our post nor take to flight nor throw away our arms), and those of a temperate man (e.g. not to commit adultery nor to gratify one’s lust), and those of a good-tempered man [*πρᾶος*] (e.g. not to strike another nor to speak evil). . . .” Ross’ translation.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. *Pomp.* 33.2; *Flam.* 21.1–2 (*πραότης* and *μεγαλοψυχία*); *Crass.* 30.2 (*πραότης* and *φιλοφροσύνη*).

ond magistracy during the term of his first “by performing favors for those under his command and being lenient to them” (*διὰ τοῦ χαρίζεσθαι καὶ πρᾶος εἶναι τοῖς ἀρχομένοις*);<sup>20</sup> instead he was *φοβερός* to those disobedient. And Solon (*Sol.* 15.1), though he rejected the tyranny, did not manage affairs “in the most lenient manner” (*τὸν πραότατον τρόπον*). Some occasions, then, do not demand *prāotēs*.<sup>21</sup> It is not that *prāotēs* per se is a fault, but it is possible for a person to practice it to excess. In the preceding passages a superior dealt with subordinates without *prāotēs*; and, though the usage is basically the same when the adjective is employed to describe the subordinate rather than the superior, in the latter instance *πρᾶος* perhaps comes into English better as “amenable” or “tractable.” This is the case in *Luc.* 2.5, where Plutarch observes that their political disorders and misfortunes “rendered the Cyrenaeans amenable to the constitutional reforms of Lucullus (*νομοθετοῦντι Δενκόλλω πράοντος*).” And in *Lyc.* 30.4 Plutarch remarks: “And just as it is the object of the art of horsemanship to make the horse tractable (*πρᾶον*) and obedient (*πειθήνιον*), so it is the task of the science of kingship to instill *eupeitheia* in men.”<sup>22</sup> *Prāotēs* is a thing learned, not a spontaneous or natural reaction; the horse is taught to be *πρᾶος*—that is, to restrain his natural inclinations and to obey the will of his master. And in *Cor.* 15.4 *τὸ πρᾶον* is spoken of as being produced by *logos* and *paideia*.

The interpretation placed upon *prāotēs* so far presents a problem in several instances where Plutarch speaks of it as a quality

<sup>20</sup>The association between *πρᾶος εἶναι* and *χαρίζεσθαι* is again present in *Phoc.* 31.3. Cf. *Moralia* 1108 B, where *πραότης* and *χάρις* are attributed to Socrates (but see *Phaedo* 116C).

<sup>21</sup>Cf. *Oth.* 16.6 (*δεητικός* and *πρᾶος*). Aristotle also makes allowances for such situations when he observes, in connection with those who tend to the excess with regard to *δργαλ* (*πραότης* is defined as *μεσότης περὶ δργάς, supra*, n. 13), “. . . and sometimes we call angry people manly, as being capable of ruling” (*Eth. Nic.* IV.5, 1126<sup>b</sup>1–2, Ross’ translation).

<sup>22</sup>Cf. Aristotle’s remarks that *πραότης* “leans toward the deficiency” (soon designated as *ἀρρυγητά*) and that “sometimes we praise those practicing the deficiency and describe them as *πρᾶοι*” (*Eth. Nic.* IV.5, 1125<sup>b</sup>28, and IV.5, 1126<sup>a</sup>36–1126<sup>b</sup>1, respectively). Throughout this study references have been made in the footnotes to points of contact between Plutarch’s general usage of *πραότης* and Aristotle’s detailed discussion of the term. These observations are not intended either to imply or deny direct influence. A basic difference between the concept of Aristotle and that of Plutarch appears to be that the former confines *πραότης* to the control of the single *πάθος* of *δργή*, while the latter employs it in connection with other *πάθη* in addition to *δργή*.

possessed by *physis*<sup>23</sup>. A certain Crassus, the colleague of the elder Scipio in the consulship, refuses to vie with Scipio for the command of the expedition against Carthage; one of the two reasons given by Plutarch for Crassus' unwillingness to oppose Scipio is that his *physis* kept him at home, since he was not *φιλόνικος* but *πρᾶος* (*Fab.* 25.3-4). A similar connection with *physis* occurs in *Ages.* 20.7, where Plutarch lists the reasons for the political impotence of Agesipolis, the co-ruler of King Agesilaus, whose stronger will he follows: the exile of his father, his youth, and his natural character (*φύσει δὲ πρᾶος καὶ κόσμιος*).<sup>24</sup>

In Plutarch's general usage, as we have previously seen, *prāotēs* is the antithesis of a spontaneous, natural quality; yet in the cases just cited it is expressly stated or at least implied that a person is *πρᾶος* by *physis*. A possible solution to the apparent incongruity is that Plutarch is not concerned with impeccable exactness in terminology and has, therefore, inadvertently contradicted himself. Although Plutarch, fundamentally a moralist and biographer,<sup>25</sup> does not confine himself to a terminology so precise as that of Aristotle, Dihle in his excellent study of Greek biography has contended that the ethical theory set forth by Aristotle and transmitted by the later Peripatetics established itself permanently in Greek biographical method and reveals itself in Plutarch's *Lives*.<sup>26</sup> While Dihle's investigations almost rule out the possibility that Plutarch could have contradicted himself in such a basic ethical matter as the relation between *physis* and moral character (*ēthos*), they do offer a solution to our present quandary. Dihle points out that for Plutarch, as well as for the Peripatetics, a particular moral characteristic (*ēthos*) can not be developed unless a person is endowed by *physis*

<sup>23</sup>For a survey of the importance of *φύσις* in Greek ethics, see Schwartz *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 10).

<sup>24</sup>Cf. *Them.* 3.3; *Cleom.* 1.4. For *πρᾶος* and *κόσμιος*, see n. 6.

<sup>25</sup>Erbse *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 2) has emphasized the fact that the parallel *Lives* were composed within the framework of certain moral qualities common to the pair in question. Furthermore, Plutarch's basic intent in the *Lives* is to inspire the emulation of the virtues of the great men about whom he writes (*Aem.* 1; *Demetr.* 1.1-6), and he is more concerned with character than with great deeds (*Alex.* 1; *Nic.* 1.5). See Konrat Ziegler, "Plutarchus," *RE* XXI (1951) 903-905 for a complete discussion.

<sup>26</sup>Albrecht Dihle, "Studien zur Griechischen Biographie," *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, Phil.-hist. Kl., Dritte Folge, Nr. 37 (1956) 57-103. Cf. Erbse *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 2) 400, n. 1.

with the capacity for this *ēthos*; the *physis*, furthermore, is constant, unchanging.

Let us apply Dihle's conclusions to the passage from the *Life of Fabius* and that from the *Life of Agesilaus*. Although *prāotēs* is the product of deliberate effort, self-discipline, and training, a person can not develop it if his *physis* does not include a capacity for *prāotēs*. Crassus and Agesipolis have this natural capacity; yet their *prāotēs* is still basically self-restraint. The apparent contradiction is the result of Plutarch's incorporating into his narrative a certain ethical doctrine without telling us what he was doing; it is a popular presentation of a technical matter. The situation is similar in *Cor. 1.3*, where a *physis* that is γενναία and ἀγαθή, but "not properly trained" (*παιδείας ἐνδεής*), is compared to a fertile plain that is not cultivated. Just as the capacity for goodness must be developed by conscious effort, so must the natural capacity for *prāotēs*. The final virtue does not change its characteristics because it derives from *physis*; rather, every virtue, and vice for that matter, has its foundation in *physis*. Likewise, when Plutarch says that both Romulus and Theseus were *πολιτικοί* by *physis* (*Comp. Thes. Rom. 2.1*), he does not imply that they became political figures without conscious effort or that every political decision was a spontaneous reaction.

In summary we conclude that for Plutarch *prāotēs*<sup>27</sup> is essentially a self-restraint which avoids excess of every kind, whether physical or emotional, whether within the individual or in his relations with other people, but which is out of place in circumstances demanding intensity of feeling and severity of action. It is an inner moral condition that manifests itself in the dignity of a person's appearance, his control of an emotional impulse, and the forbearance with which he treats another.

RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE  
April 1960

<sup>27</sup>πραότης also occurs in juxtaposition or close connection with δικαιοσύνη (*Lyc. 28.13; Tim. 37.5; Cic. 6.1; Pel. 26.8; Per. 2.5; Num. 6.3; 20.4; Comp. Lyc. Num. 4.13*) and ἐπιείκεια (*TG 2.5; Alex. 13.2-3; Sert. 25.6; Caes. 54. 3-4; Pyrrh. 23.3; Comp. Per. Fab. 3.2*).

# The Concept of *Ex-Opere-Operato* Efficacy in the Fathers as an Evidence of Magic in Early Christianity

*E. G. Weltin*

IN ITS SEARCH for meaning and security in the vast new Hellenistic environment, the ancient world turned in a versatile way to many different panaceas: learned scientific investigation, deep religious inspiration, lofty philosophical speculation, and grossest magical hocus-pocus. Young Christianity growing up in these surroundings found it difficult to avoid some surface infection from the magic in the air. A general probe into all the areas of the Christian body susceptible to this cancerous growth would be exhaustive; for the present we shall localize our exploratory investigation mainly in the third and fourth centuries, restrict it to very definite symptoms of magical contagion and support it only in Patristic literature.

On the whole, apostolic and second-century Christianity breathed a rather mild atmosphere of magic because the great front of Oriental occultism had not yet moved into the West.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, classical paganism, traditionally a strong counter-current to magic, was still relatively influential.<sup>2</sup> Ever since the issuance of the Twelve Tables,

<sup>1</sup>However, the writings of Lucretius, Lucian, and Plutarch attest to the prevalence of superstition. Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* 28.4) says everyone is in fear of being bewitched.

<sup>2</sup>It is possibly too often and too definitely assumed that late classical paganism was a completely hollow shell. One might label the Augustan religious revival antiquarian and academic, and the erection of great temples like Baalbek anachronous and superficial, but one can not so easily dismiss the abundant evidence for the virility of official paganism in the writings of the Christian Fathers. Judging from the Apologists,

its official priesthood had consistently indicted this "bastard sister of religion" and banned it from the *jus divinum*. The five chief outlets of classical religious expression: the *sacrificio*, *lustratio*, *piaculum*, *votum*, and *divinatio*, while carrying vestigial traces of probable early magical origins, had eventually found ways to be of service to a true religious spirit. Despite the fact that in later classical religion antiquarian formalistic prayers and rituals remained prescribed, airs of *ex-opere-operato* efficacy still seemed to surround lustrations, and tight legalistic contractual relationships appeared to bind gods and men, there exists surprisingly disappointing evidence that the gods could be constrained by any magical gnosis to respond to human rituals<sup>3</sup> and that they were, therefore, begrudgingly eager to escape this compulsion by taking advantage of every faulty ceremonial. Nor is there any evidence that they had ever made a voluntary solemn contract with men pledging themselves to render their worshippers' rituals efficacious upon demand. Prayers had long substituted the subjunctive for the imperative. The worshipper merely rationally expected that if honored with proper rites, the gods, as the traditional benefactors of Rome, would be pleased to respond.<sup>4</sup> The chief, or even a major, indictment of classical paganism by the Christian apologist is not for magic.

---

the Christians saw the old paganism together with Greek philosophy rather than the mysteries as the great rivals of Christianity. Why should the Fathers, unless they are hopelessly naive, point out consistently the impiety and foolishness of the classical gods if no one took these old worthies seriously? Or why trouble to convert them into daemons if they were already dead? For classical paganism and magic see in general: C. Bailey, *Phases in the Religion of Ancient Rome* (Berkeley 1932) 14f; W. Fowler, *Religious Experience of the Roman People* (London 1911) 57, 105-7, 224.

<sup>3</sup>See Bailey 37-39, 73-96 and Fowler 181-189. Cicero reports the view (*De Div.* 1.81-3) that the gods ought to feel constrained by their nature to predict the future to man. But besides this remark he has nothing to say about a contract. Nor Plutarch. Pliny in his *Natural History* seems to suggest that man can compel the gods to act. The fact that priests can evoke and suppress thunder storms (*fulmina elici*, 28.2[3].13) and their supposed intimate connection with Jupiter Elicius seem to imply that the priests are compelling the will of Jupiter. Also the phrase *quod numini imperet* (28.2[4].20) seems to support the idea. But on the other hand he says "imperare naturae sacra audacis credere, nec minus hebetis beneficiis abrogare vires . . ." (2.53[54].140-1) and in 28.2(4).17 the efficacy of certain formulae of the augurs is taken as an example of divine indulgence. One line in Virgil (*Ec.* 8.70) "numero deus impare gaudet" suggests that the gods are pleased with pure "magical" hocus-pocus.

<sup>4</sup>The gods, mythologically conceived, are motivated by anger and favor. It is these two motives that Epicurus specifically denies them in the first of his *Principal Doc-*

Despite consistent accusations of *supersticio* by the pagans, early Christianity seems, on the whole, quite anxious to avoid the bizarre. Even the "mystic" St. Paul mistrusted the decidedly un-Roman flavor of glossolalia and rampant prophecy; soon the display of these charismata threatened to single one out as a Montanist. Peter's magical contests in the *Acts of Peter and Paul* with the precocious aviator Simon Magus are fabrications of a later and more credulous and romantic age. Early Christian rituals were too fluid to invite *ex-opere-operato* interpretations: Paul baptized and laid hands on the same persons on the same occasion,<sup>5</sup> leaving no sharp indication which ceremony conferred the gifts of the Spirit. Romans 6:3 rather than implying a strong *ex-opere-operato* concept of baptism, pictures it as an incentive to some sustained cooperation on our part.<sup>6</sup> Diverse sacramental formulae preclude an ascription of self-virtuous powers to any magical set of words. Along with the Trinitarian formula, the *Didache* speaks of baptism into the "name

---

trines: "The blessed and immortal nature . . . is never constrained by anger or favor." Any act of worship, if properly performed, pleases the gods; if not, it angers them. For example, the cutting up of the sacrificial victim by Prometheus in Hesiod (*Theog.* 554) displeased Zeus. This explanation might also account for failures; the god, even though pleased by the immediate act, might be angry for some other reason so that the pleasing act might have to be repeated several times before the god is won over. There is a passage in Eunapius (7.3.12) where Maximus tells Chrysanthius that an expert in religion need never accept unfavorable omens but can compel the nature of the divine to incline toward the worshipper. But on the basis of the pleasure and anger explanation this merely could mean than an expert knows so well how to please the deity that by persisting he can at last win over the divine good will. This theory suggests a possible explanation for the apparently mechanical procedures in Roman religion without resorting to any "magical" explanation. I owe most of these ideas and references to the interest of a colleague.

<sup>5</sup>Acts 19:5-6.

<sup>6</sup>The interesting problem of what Paul meant in this passage is a puzzle in itself and fortunately outside the scope of this study. But for a consideration of the relationship of Paul's baptismal views to the mystery cults in connection with other relevant materials, see Per Lundberg, "La Typologie Baptismale dans L'Ancienne Eglise," *Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis X* (Uppsala 1942) 215f. O. Casel, "Neue Zeugnisse für das Kultmysterium," *Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft XIII* (Münster in Westf. 1933) 111, records Theodore of Mopsuestia's views on this Pauline passage as: "Er [Paul, Röm. 6.3f] lehrte damit klar, dass wir getauft worden sind, damit wir an uns selbst den Tod und die Auferstehung des Herrn nachahmen sollten und damit wir aus unserem Gedächtnis der Ereignisse, die stattgefunden haben, die Festigung unseres Glaubens an die zukünftigen Dinge erhalten sollten . . Und wir vollziehen in sakramentaler Weise die Ereignisse, die sich in bezug auf Christus unserem Herrn vollzogen, zu dem Zweck, dass, wie es uns durch diese Dinge gezeigt worden ist, unsere Gemeinschaft mit ihm unsere Hoffnung stärken möge."

of the Lord"; Acts, too, has Paul baptizing in "the name of the Lord Jesus." The Eucharistic formula differs in all the primary sources and the normal sequence of the bread and the cup is reversed by Luke as well as by the *Didache*.<sup>7</sup> The early Apologists rely upon reason and common sense more than on miracles to provide them with persuasive arguments, and the potency of relics and all the other wonders of vulgar Catholicism were yet to be discovered.

But discovered they were, especially when fourth-century converts, often more politically prudent than theologically enlightened, brought with them a more virile magical orientation. In a world being both Orientalized and Germanized at once, it was natural that "isms" should arise to stabilize emotional security. Gnosticism grew to new proportions. The vulgar relished tips on the peculiar virtue of each new homely charm and spell. The sophisticated, trusting in a kind of inverted sympathetic magic, sought knowledge of correct astrological correspondences or spheres of influence between the movements of the heavenly bodies and the course of human events. Mystics craved esoteric gnosis of the psychology — or theology — of the gods and of their history — or mythology — so that by imitating actions or episodes in their divine careers they might, in turn, be "saved" vicariously through sympathetic magic. Such, becoming converts to the well-known "mystery" religions, were automatically equipped with a built-in gnosis for salvation. Even the learned succumbed. Neo-Platonists, like Iamblichus, made philosophy an occult art of theurgy with *ex-opere-operato* efficiency to compel divine attention through the secret rite and the cabalistic word. Gnosticism threatened to turn even Christianity into a science of magic. Apocryphal gnostic literature whetted Christian appetites, too, for the secret logia of Jesus like that revealed in the *Gospel of Thomas* — words too scandalous for even restricted circles but promising to reward their interpreters with a guarantee of eternal

<sup>7</sup>Acts 19:5-6; *Didache* 9.5, 7.1. For the Eucharist formulae: I Cor. 11:23; Mark 14:22; Matt. 26:26; Luke 22:15. See Luke and the *Didache* (9.1-4) for a reversal of the bread and cup sequence.

life.<sup>8</sup> Apparently all, from the simpleton to the seer, sought the Gnosis to force the hands of the gods.<sup>9</sup>

Since it is unlikely that rank-and-file converts to Christianity were able, or anxious for that matter, to discern and act upon the subtle distinction that separated the "magical" efficacy of their former invocations and cult rituals from the true "miraculous" power of words and signs in their new Christian dispensation, one can to some extent appreciate the quasi-magical flavor of third and fourth century Christianity. While this flavor is abundantly evidenced in the pseudo-magical quality of the formulas and liturgies of different sacramental rites, in the mysterious vagaries of gnostic, apocryphal, and heretical literature, and in the strange practices of vulgar Christianity imported from the pagan background, we wish to restrict ourselves to the literary evidence of the Fathers who, it appears, were themselves not entirely immune to the impact of magic about them. Their general orthodox outlook which naturally demands a sustained intolerance of the magical, admittedly makes scattered, oblique, or inconsistent remarks inviting a magical interpretation very difficult to interpret and assess. But some passages seem sufficiently clear to rule out the possibility that they are meant merely as symbolical, metaphorical, or rhetorical devices. These passages range from Jerome's display of harmless naive credulity when he vouches for the preservation at Antioch in salt of a bizarre mannikin with a hooked snout, horned forehead, and goat feet,<sup>10</sup> to Augustine's pseudo-magical theological speculations on the *ex-opere-operato* virtue of the sacraments. As of old, we find dreams and omens revealing impending events and confirming theological verities; even Cyprian, the hard-headed champion of hierarchical institutionalism, feels moved occasionally to share with his readers particularly convincing nightmares and to declare mistrust of them

<sup>8</sup>Eva Meyerovitch, "The Gnostic Manuscripts of Upper Egypt," *Diogenes* (Spring 1959) 103-4.

<sup>9</sup>See for example W. W. Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization*<sup>2</sup> (London 1930) 316; F. Legge, *Forerunners and Rivals of Christianity* (Cambridge, Mass. 1915) I 104-5; H. O. Taylor, *The Medieval Mind*<sup>4</sup> (Cambridge, Mass. 1949) I 47.

<sup>10</sup>Jerome, *Vita Pauli* 8. All references and translations of the Fathers are taken, when available, from the *Ante* and *Post Nicene Fathers* series, ed. Roberts and Donaldson, Schaff and Wace.

a badge of anti-clericalism.<sup>11</sup> Irenaeus, Cyprian, Ambrose, Sulpicius Severus, Cassian, Socrates, and Sozomen all abundantly and tiresomely attest to fantastic and often puerile miracles; Augustine approves of them as distinct confirmations of truth.<sup>12</sup> Even the normally sober Gregory of Nyssa records wonders performed by the great thaumaturgist Gregory which would baffle not only the most versatile pagan magician — and old Moses, too — but would make even Pliny suspicious. John Chrysostom seemingly senses an uncomfortable similarity between Christian and pagan wonderworkings, for he warns that miracles “often carry with them either a notion of mere fancy, or another evil suspicion, although ours be not such.”<sup>13</sup> Miraculous relics and tombs have the Fathers’ blessings; they deplore only that bogus monks were hawking out a doubtful line of these martyrs’ limbs.<sup>14</sup> The Sign of the Cross, properly capitalized as almost a cosmic reality, opens doors, quenches poisonous drugs and bites, drives out demons, hexes pagan sacrifices and oracles, foils all sorts of real magic and witchcraft,<sup>15</sup> and even keeps tools sharp. Gregory of Nyssa believes the actual wood of the cross has power in itself to produce wonderous cures; Ambrose suspects that the number 318 has a holy power, and Sozomen records that the power of a word has proved equally efficacious in silencing philosophers and cleaving stone walls.<sup>16</sup> Origen reputedly objects to the casting of a person’s horoscope because it destroys the subject’s free will,<sup>17</sup> and it is well known that Constantine thinks it enlightened to make an official legal distinction between “black” and “white” magic. The end the perpetrator has in mind determines the color.

However, a recital of mere instances of personal credulities, or of isolated evidences of an eccentric faith in the potency of some peripheral act in vulgar Catholicism, is scarcely representa-

<sup>11</sup>See Lactant. *De Opif. Dei* 18; August. *Ep.* 159.34; Cyprian, *Ep.* 68.10.

<sup>12</sup>August. *c. Faustum* 13.5, *De Util. Credendi* 35.

<sup>13</sup>John Chrys. *Hom.* 32.11 (on Matt.).

<sup>14</sup>August. *De Oper. Monach.* 36.

<sup>15</sup>John Chrys. *Hom.* 54.7 (on Matt.); Greg. Nyss. *In Bapt. Christi*; Lactant. *Div. Inst.* 4.27; Athanasius, *De Incar. Verbi Dei* 48.

<sup>16</sup>Greg. Nyss. *In Bapt. Christi*; Ambr. *De Fide* (Prologue) 3; Sozomen, *H. E.* 1.18.

<sup>17</sup>George B. Vetter, *Magic and Religion* (New York 1958) 150. Unfortunately I have been unable to find the statement in Origen himself.

tive of the quality of the Father's thinking. Far more just to them, and enlightening to us, is an examination of their views on the possibility that an *ex-opere-operato* efficacy attaches itself to Christian ceremonials. In investigating this thesis, it seems well to be alert to: 1) evidences of faith in the inherent power of words and signs both in themselves and as imitative operations, 2) signs of efficaciousness in important ceremonies regardless of the subjective intention or character of the ministrant or recipient, 3) indications that God's attention, response, and even presence can be compelled by the ministrant whenever he speaks the required words and makes the prescribed esoteric signs.

### *The Power of Words and Signs*

Belief in the intrinsic power of words among Christians is not a Gnostic monopoly.<sup>18</sup> Origen professes that names, when translated into foreign languages, lose their natural powers and are no longer able to accomplish what they did before when uttered in their native tongue. When the name of a person, for instance, is translated into a different language "we could not make him do or suffer the same things which he would have done or suffered under the appellation originally bestowed on him."<sup>19</sup> If one changes the name of a deity in an invocation or oath he naturally gets no results because names only when properly used "produce certain effects, owing either to the nature of those names or to their powers."<sup>20</sup> The names of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob when coupled with the name of God, Origen admonishes us, possess such intrinsic efficacy that not only the Jews themselves employed these words in exorcising demons "but so also do almost all those who occupy themselves with incantations and magical rites" and have recourse to the best standard international handbooks on magic. These words have mysterious powers and marvelous qualities "patent to those who are qualified to use them"; Genesis itself establishes "in the clearest manner that effects not to be lightly regarded are produced by the invocation" of these names;

<sup>18</sup>See Eva Meyerovitch, *op.cit.* 84-117.

<sup>19</sup>Origen, *c. Cels.* 5.45. ". . . τὸν δεῖνα οὐκ ἀν . . . ποιήσαιμεν παθεῖν η̄ δράσαι ἀπερ̄ πάθου η̄ δράσαι ἀν καλούμενος τῇ πρώτῃ θέσει τοῦ διόματος αὐτοῦ." (Migne)

<sup>20</sup>Origen, *ibid.*

their precise meaning and interpretation, however, can be gleaned only through the original Hebrew.<sup>21</sup> Apparently when one pronounces certain names he unleashes, as it were, a power into the air so that the world is never quite the same again. Hilary, too, believes that names are somehow inseparably connected to, and inherent in, the things which they signify.<sup>22</sup> The names of Christian churches: Holy Wisdom in Constantinople, or Holy Cross in Rome, are eloquent witnesses that not only heretical Christian gnostics pictured God's attributes as practically independent self-virtuous hypostases or personified material instruments as transcendental efficacious realities.

The holy Name of Jesus — again properly capitalized — is often spoken of as virtually a substantial manifestation of the Godhead. The step from this position to the point where the Fathers attest to the "marvelous efficacy of the Name" of Jesus in performing sundry miracles is, of course, an easy and legitimate one. Athanasius apparently was worried about possible misinterpretations of the efficacy of the Name for, while telling how all demoniac frenzy dissipates when His Name is uttered, he assuringly and somewhat circuitously argues that this marvel is accomplished not through magic since it is obvious Christ is no magician in as much as His Name destroys "magic" rather than confirms it. Results of the invocation, at any rate, if not magical, are equally surprising. In Athanasius' *Life of Antony*, where there is a plethora of demons, a big one was shriveled up by the Name of Jesus while another was scorched a bit.<sup>23</sup> Cyril agrees that the invocation of the Name chars evil spirits like the fiercest flame, and Tertullian, who specializes in demons, early confessed that "all the authority and power we have over them is from naming the Name of Christ."<sup>24</sup>

To the more sublime. In baptism words are very significant. They seem to be so in two ways: 1) as framing typological ref-

<sup>21</sup>Origen, *c. Cels.* 5.33-35, Justin, *Dial. c. Tryph.* 85 also vouches for the effectiveness of this invocation but doesn't think it is quite as dependable in exorcisms as the use of the name Jesus.

<sup>22</sup>Hilary, *De Trin.* 7.31.

<sup>23</sup>See Jerome, *Vita S. Hilar.* 14; Athanasius, *De Incar. Verbi Dei* 48, *Vita Anton.* 40-1.

<sup>24</sup>Cyril, *Cat.* 20.3; *Tert. Apol.* 23.

erences to baptism to be used in the instructions and prayers attendant upon that sacrament, and 2) as constituting specific consecration formulae which operate directly, automatically, and instantaneously upon the initiate. As tempting as the former be,<sup>25</sup> we must not be led astray from our self-imposed Patristic limitation. Besides, it is highly doubtful if typology, which is fundamentally a form of exegesis, stands in any direct connection with magic other than furnishing us a feeling for the general atmosphere in which magic worked. Typology stands to magic in the same proportion as a passive reminiscence which encourages our expectations can be said to stand to a real imitative action efficacious in itself. The typological references to former miracles of transformation and deliverance merely create a background atmosphere in reminding the initiate that events of similar kinds can be expected to repeat themselves in divine history. Words of consecration, which have a direct action, are of a different stripe.

Pagans apparently thought Christians overestimated the potency of such words in baptism; they are wont, says Rufinus, to deride us for deceiving ourselves in thinking "that crimes committed in deed could be washed away by words," and Porphyry brands adult baptism as presumptuous in that many sins are forgiven by a simple invocation of Christ's name.<sup>26</sup> Cyril, while speaking of the power of words over the baptismal waters, draws an interesting comparison which seems not entirely free from magical implications:

<sup>25</sup>Per Lundberg's study "La Typologie Baptismale dans L' Ancienne Eglise" (*supra* n. 6) points out that the prayers of different baptismal rites, Greek, Syrian, Copt, Ethiopian, Armenian, all tend to use biblical texts reminiscent of miracles of change, transformation, or deliverance (pp. 19-23). Favorite typological references are to the passing through the Red Sea, crossing the Jordan, Jonah and the whale, etc. Such past miracles of deliverance guarantee to the baptismal initiate that he too can expect a miraculous response from God in his like situation (p. 27). The Fathers, too, use these same favorite typological references: Tert. (*De Bapt.* 9), Origen (*Hom. in Num.* 26.4) Ambr. (*Hex.* 1.4), Greg. Nyss. (*In Bapt. Christi*). The latter, for example, points out how the Jews passing through the Red Sea proclaim the good tidings of salvation by water because through it they abandoned Egypt, representative of the burden of sin, and delivered themselves from the Egyptian tyrant, symbolical of the devil and his hosts and material existence in general. Crossing the Jordan is even a more elaborate figure with Gregory of Nyssa. In passing through this river the Jews arrived in the promised land. Besides, the Jordan was consecrated in a special way by the later presence of Jesus. See Per Lundberg, especially pp. 116ff, 146, 163.

<sup>26</sup>Rufinus, *Comm. in Sym. Apos. (de Remis. Pec.)*; Porph. Frag. 88.

For just as the sacrifices on pagan altars are in themselves indifferent matter and yet have become defiled by reason of the invocation made over them to the idols, so, but in the opposite sense, the ordinary water in the font acquires sanctifying power when it receives the invocation of the Holy Spirit, of Christ, and of the Father.<sup>27</sup>

The baptismal formula grew to be considered particularly fool-proof; early divergencies in the form gave way to a universal use of the Trinitarian invocation. Gregory of Nyssa reminds us that we do not receive the sacrament in silence but that the names of the three sacred Persons are spoken over us and that the formula must include all Three because "the perfect boon of life" is not imparted by baptism if the name of the Spirit or of the Son be omitted.<sup>28</sup> Optatus declares that while some features of the rite may be altered with impunity, the Trinitarian invocation must remain inviolate at all costs.<sup>29</sup> In fact, the entire controversy over the necessity of repeating baptism conferred by heretics hinged on the question whether the sacrament solemnized by the sacred words is by that fact alone valid. The Council of Arles, in deciding it was, made the use of the Trinitarian formula the sole criterion of validity.<sup>30</sup>

Many of the Fathers ascribe to the words of the Eucharistic rite a special virtue since they cause a simultaneous change of some sort to accompany their utterance. Justin, an early witness of the sacramental character of the Eucharist, attests to the fact that Christians were early taught that it is by pronouncing "the word that came from Him" that the food is blessed and changed into the flesh and blood of Christ.<sup>31</sup> Gregory of Nyssa pointedly asserts that it is not the act of eating that gradually alters the bread but that "it is at once changed into the Body by means of the word (*i.e.* the sacred benediction) as the Word Himself said: 'This is My Body'." In another passage he declares: "The bread again is,

<sup>27</sup>Cyril, *Cat.* 3.3.

<sup>28</sup>Greg. Nyss. *In Bapt. Christi; Ep.* 2.

<sup>29</sup>Optatus, *De Schis. Donat.* 5.7.

<sup>30</sup>Canon 7: ". . . ut si ad ecclesiam aliquis de haeresi venerit, interrogent eum sym-  
bolum; et si perviderint eum in Patre, et Filio, et Spiritu Sancto esse baptizatum, manus  
in tantum imponantur ut accipiat Spiritum Sanctum. Quod si interrogatus non responderit  
hanc Trinitatem — baptizetur."

<sup>31</sup>Justin, *Apol.* 1.66.

up to a certain point of time, common bread, but when the sacramental action consecrates it, it is called and becomes the Body of Christ."<sup>32</sup> Ambrose likewise holds that "the very words of the Lord and Savior operate" to change the elements in the Eucharist.<sup>33</sup>

It is the same power of the word that operates in ordination to transform by some unseen power and grace the soul of the priest and to render him venerable and honorable apart from other men as an instructor in hidden mysteries. In like manner, a benediction of words imparts to oil and wine its own particular sacred significance and operation, and transforms an altar from a common stone into a holy table — a transformation not unlike that experienced by the common hazel wand of Moses into a rod of miracles.<sup>34</sup>

It is surprising that in exorcism, where offhand one would somehow naturally expect "magical" doings to be at a premium, there appears to be no independent virtue attached to any distinct verbal formula or particular rite. They are too diversified. Some practitioners attempted results in the Name of Christ and by warning the recalcitrant demon of the woes in store for him. Others preferred to invoke "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"<sup>35</sup> or "the God of Israel" or the more typological formula "God who drowned the king of Egypt and the Egyptians in the Red Sea." Even later, when exorcists were formally ordained,<sup>36</sup> the bishop gave them a book containing diverse standard exorcisms with the injunction: "Receive thou these and commit them to memory."<sup>37</sup> An interesting attempt to formalize a stubborn diversity. This informality to which no magical efficacy could adhere is probably explained by the fact that in exorcism the effect sought

<sup>32</sup>Greg. Nyss. *Orat. Cat. Magna* 37; *In Bapt. Christi.*

<sup>33</sup>Ambr. *De Myster.* 9.

<sup>34</sup>Greg. Nyss. *In Bapt. Christi.*

<sup>35</sup>This expression appears to be a distinct magical formula. See Origen's view above, also Justin's (n. 21) and the article by M. Rist, "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, A Liturgical Magical Formula" *IBL* 57 (1938) 289-303.

<sup>36</sup>Ordination of exorcists is first mentioned probably by Euseb. *H. E.* 6.43.

<sup>37</sup>For different forms of exorcisms see Justin, *Apol.* 2.6, *Dial. c. Tryph.* 85; Iren. *c. Haer.* 2.43; Tert. *Apol.* 23, Origen, *c. Cels.* 4.34. See also *Post-Nicene Fathers* (Second Series) VII, p. xix, and Per Lundberg, *op.cit.* 42-46.

<sup>38</sup>*Constit. Apost.* 7.42.

is sensible; obvious failures of exorcists to produce immediate or even eventual results conclusively demonstrated that no *ex-opere-operato* power resided in any particular "magical" formula. The fact that sensible observation compelled a more rational approach to exorcism, serves to highlight the general "naïve" faith of Christians in believing that a self-virtuous efficacy attached to their other ceremonials.

Not only were the words of the sacramental action regarded as virtuous but the visible signs were as well. The words, as it were, passed on their efficacy to the object spoken over. The *Apostolic Constitutions* vouch for the fact that "sanctification" in the Name of the Lord Jesus, of the "exorcised oil" used at baptism, imparted to it spiritual grace and efficacious strength.<sup>38</sup> We read abundantly of sacred oils curing people of diseases.<sup>39</sup> Cyril thinks that "the ordinary water in the font acquires sanctifying power when it receives the invocation" and he seems to attribute to the "exorcised oil" the same power as to the exorcism itself, that of dispelling all the invisible powers of the evil one. Gregory of Nyssa seems to imply that ordinary water has an efficacious baptismal potency. Apparently deceived by the mystical geographical misconception that all waters of the earth were in direct communication, he felt that the Jordan, once sanctified by Jesus' baptism and having received thereby the first fruits of sanctification and benediction into its channel, could convey this consecration to all the waters of the world.<sup>40</sup> He would naturally think baptismal waters entirely efficacious after they had been themselves transformed by a direct sanctification.<sup>41</sup> Tertullian reiterates essentially the same idea: the waters, being themselves sanctified by invocation of the Holy Spirit, acquire a sacramental power of sanctification themselves. However, he appends an interesting "scientific" explanation of the sanctification process diffusing its power into the water:

<sup>38</sup>John Chrys. *Hom.* 32.9 (on Matt.); Tert. *Ad. Scap.* 4; Jerome, *Vita S. Hilar.* 32; Euseb. *H. E.* 6.9.

<sup>40</sup>Cyril, *Cat.* 3.3, 20.3; Greg. Nyss. *In Bapt. Christi.* See Per Lundberg, *op.cit.* 163 and also the eulogy on water in Tert. *De Bapt.* 9.

<sup>41</sup>Greg. Nyss. *De Spiritu San.* (*Post-Nicene*, Second Series, V 332).

. . . from that which hovered over (*i.e.* the spiritual force), that which was hovered over (*i.e.* the water) borrowed a holiness since it is necessary that in every case an underlying material substance should catch the quality of that which overhangs it, most of all a corporeal of a spiritual, adapted (as the spiritual is) through the subtleness of its substance both for penetrating and insinuating.<sup>42</sup>

In one passage Gregory of Nyssa rhetorically asks how the hallowed water cleanses and illuminates a man. His answer, that this happens "by the incomprehensible operation of God" not entirely dissimilar to the phenomenon of a man developing from a seed, might be interpreted as implying that baptism operates through the regular processes of nature under God. This interpretation is not too much weakened by another instance where Gregory assumes a basic similarity but difference in degree between baptism, where God is invoked, and the *ex-opere-operato* act of procreation, where He is not invoked.<sup>43</sup>

Occasionally the sign seems interpreted as slightly more than simply a symbolic representation; sometimes it appears to carry a lingering flavor of an efficacious act in imitative magic. In one case Gregory of Nyssa apparently pictures the triple immersion of an initiate in the water as purely a symbolic triple burial merely representing for ourselves that grace of the resurrection which was wrought in three days. Still the rite seems more than just a commemorative affair. Rather it establishes some sort of imitative affinity between the initiate and the Master. Even though our nature does not admit an exact and entire imitation [*μίμησις*] of our Leader — since a complete imitation would mean identity — still it is necessary that some means be devised in the baptismal process to establish "a kind of affinity and likeness between him who follows and Him who leads the way." Just as we must imitate experts to become experts ourselves, so we must travel the same imitative paths with Christ and copy His "three days' state of death by burying ourselves in that element (water) which has

<sup>42</sup>Tert. *De Bapt.* 4. This explanation seems quite opposed to the general Stoic notion that the lighter substance tends to rise, not hover over and descend upon the lower. On the other hand it is somewhat suggestive of the permeation of Lucretius' "mind atoms".

<sup>43</sup>Greg. Nyss. *In Bapt. Christi, Orat. Cat. Magna* 34.

a mutual affinity to earth" in which Christ was buried. This imperfect imitation carried out by having water poured on us three times and ascending again out of the water to enact Christ's saving burial and resurrection, removes sin and suppresses our congenital tendencies to evil because once having been conformed to His death, the initiate's sin is henceforth surely a corpse itself.<sup>44</sup> Basil also interprets baptism somewhat in the light of an imitative action [*μίμησις*]. True, he pictures the burial of the candidate in water as only a figure of death; still it is by imitating the burial of Christ and being received by the water as into a tomb, that we achieve our descent into Hell, a sort of no-man's land in our about-face from our old works of the flesh to our regeneration or second life. At the same time this "burial" insures a simultaneous pouring-in of a quickening power by the Spirit.<sup>45</sup> Cyril, in speaking of an imitation of the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection in baptism, reminds us that Christ was actually crucified, buried, and arose again so that we, sharing His sufferings by imitation [*μίμησις*], might gain salvation in reality. For if one has been united with the likeness of the Savior's death he shall be deemed worthy of His resurrection. Or again: ". . . now ye have been made Christs by receiving the antitype of the Holy Ghost (the chrism), and all things have been wrought in you by imitation [*εἰκονικῶς*] because ye are images [*εἰκόνες*] of Christ."<sup>46</sup>

References to imitation of Christ at the Eucharistic service by reliving His passion and death are less in evidence than those concerning baptism. Ignatius, however, seems to imply that the Christian dies at each Eucharistic celebration. Unless our will is ready to die "into His passion," His life will not be in us.<sup>47</sup> Such expressions of the imitative nature of the Eucharist will become more and more common as we approach the days of Gregory the Great.

In the case of exorcism, the visible signs, like the verbal formulae, are too diverse to carry connotations of self-virtue. Some exorcists — and they can be laymen or even women — put con-

<sup>44</sup>Greg. Nyss. *In Bapt. Christi, Orat. Cat. Magna* 35.

<sup>45</sup>Basil, *De Spiritu San.* 15.35.

<sup>46</sup>Cyril, *Cat.* 20.5, 21.1, 3.12.

<sup>47</sup>Ignatius, *Ad Magn.* 5.2.

fidence in touching and breathing to overwhelm the demon, while others prefer to lay on hands and so on. It is interesting to note in passing that the exorcised are even dressed differently: in Constantinople they appear barefoot clothed only in a tunic, while at Jerusalem they come with a veil on their faces.<sup>48</sup>

### *Independence of Ritual Efficacy*

The second part of our study investigates the extent to which sacramental acts are considered effective irrespective of the intentions and character of the principals. Pressure to consider rites self-virtuous was exerted upon Christianity from many sides. In addition to the influence of contemporary magic already spoken of, there was the powerful sanction of the Roman legal mind which gloried in conservative forms and precedents which had an objective effectiveness regardless of time or the person of the lawyer and judge. Moreover, Roman practicality demanded that the common man in a universal religion be given concrete assurances of spiritual workings by attaching these elusive benefits to something tangible in time and space. Lastly, there is the heavy hand of time; mere routine repetition of any studied and rehearsed formula unconsciously encourages an idea that results are guaranteed automatically by some inherent force in the rite itself.

In the case of baptism probably two persons, Stephen of Rome and Augustine of Hippo, did most to focus attention on the sacrament's possible natural effectiveness independent of the influence of the minister and recipient.<sup>49</sup> The view, however, is a common one in the Fathers: Ambrose advises one not to consider the person of His ministers but the office of the priest; Gregory Nazianzus curtly instructs one not to "ask for credentials of the preacher or the baptizer";<sup>50</sup> and Optatus sums up his strong sacra-

<sup>48</sup>See Tert. *Apol.* 23; Pseudo-Clement, Ep. 1 (*de Virginitate*) 12; John Chrys. *Ad Illumin.* Cat. 1.2; Cyril, *Procat.* 9.

<sup>49</sup>For Augustine see e.g. *De Bapt.* c. *Donat.* 4.11 (18ff), Ep. 89.5, 98.2, *Sermo* 49.8, c. *Litt. Peril.* 2.30, 3.40, *Tract.* 12.4 (on John). Cyprian's extensive correspondence gives Stephen's view.

<sup>50</sup>Ambr. *De Myster.* 5; Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 40.26.

mentalist views by saying "sacraenta per se esse sancta non per homines."<sup>51</sup>

The issue was raised originally c. 255 over the validity of schismatic Novatian ministrations. In general, Eastern bishops and Eastern synods upheld the principle that a heretic could not truly baptize. Probably the strongest advocate in the West of this more subjective view of the efficacy of the sacrament was Cyprian. Apparently assuming that the minister was required to be somewhat of a repository or host of the sacramental gifts he dispensed, he felt that a heretic could not impart the Holy Spirit when he, being appointed outside of the church, obviously could not possess the Spirit himself; none of those, Cyprian asserts, who oppose Christ can profit by the grace of Christ. Moreover, he thought he saw a contradiction and an impiety arising out of valid heretical baptisms where a heretic remitted sins and sanctified a person as a temple of God since the temple would of necessity be that of an heretical god or at least of a nontrinitarian one.<sup>52</sup> But Cyprian's conviction of the importance of personal forces lying outside the intrinsic essence of the sacrament itself was not to prevail. The church of Rome took a firm liberal and more legal view that baptism administered in the Name of the Trinity with the intent of incorporating a man into the church was valid even if administered by heretics and schismatics.<sup>53</sup> Stephen's insistence that a sacrament was valid outside of orthodox circles unwittingly did much to encourage the growth of an *ex-opere-operato* interpretation of the whole matter.

Augustine consistently and vigorously supported Stephen's view of the validity of heretical baptism.<sup>54</sup> But his philosophical

<sup>51</sup>Optatus, *De Schis. Donat.* 5.4. See Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*<sup>3</sup> (Berlin 1893) III 42.

<sup>52</sup>Cyprian, *Ep.* 69.3, 71.1, 72.12.

<sup>53</sup>Cyprian, *Ep.* 67-80.

<sup>54</sup>Augustine draws a distinction in the case of heretical baptism between validity and profitability. Heretical baptism is true baptism but it is unlawfully used and its benefits are in some sort of way suspended. Baptism can, he says, "indeed be received elsewhere (*i.e.* outside the Catholic pale) but it cannot profit elsewhere" (*De Bapt. c. Donat.* 1.2, *c. Litt. Peril.* 3.40, *De Bapt. c. Donat.* 7.53 [102], 5.23 [33]). See also *De Bapt. c. Donat.* 3.10 (13), where he seems less clear on the matter of profit. He is, of course, unhappy about the concessions made to heretical baptism: "Nor do we hold that those who baptize, although they confer the real true sacrament of baptism, are yet acting rightly

mind drove him further than the pope in speculating upon the role of intentions and dispositions in the sacrament. Consequently, he discusses the efficacy of baptisms given under varied circumstances: that conferred by the unbaptized, that administered in the spirit of insincerity and mockery with a distinction drawn between that given in mockery deceitfully within the church or in what was thought to be the church, and that given in mockery as in jest or in a play. He accepts baptism given deceitfully in the church as valid assuming, of course, that the ministrant used the correct "words of the gospel." While he admits indecision about that conferred in jest, he is not definitely opposed to accepting it:

. . . if I were asked whether the baptism which was thus conferred [that done as a farce or a comedy or a jest] should be approved, I should declare my opinion that we ought to pray for the declaration of God's judgment through the medium of some revelation . . . deferring all the time to the decision of those who were to give their judgment after me in case they should set forth anything as already known and determined [in the matter] . . .<sup>55</sup>

Sozomen records a case where baptism given by boys in play was recognized; it was deemed "unnecessary to rebaptize those who in their simplicity had been judged worthy of divine grace."<sup>56</sup>

Not only can the ministrant of baptism be evil and heretical but the recipient apparently can be indifferent to its reception as well. An obvious example is infant baptism which seems to have been practiced from the early church and to have remained the normal procedure despite a more obvious tendency, especially in the fourth century, to delay the sacrament until the strain and stress of youth is past.<sup>57</sup> Irenaeus is an early advocate of infant

---

in gathering adherents outside the church . . ." (*De Bapt. c. Donat.* 3.10 [13]). Cyril says: "If thy body be here but not thy mind, it profit thee nothing. Even Simon Magus once came to the laver. He was baptized but he was not enlightened . . ." Does he, too, accept the baptism as valid but merely unprofitable? (*Procat.* 2).

<sup>55</sup> August. *De Bapt. c. Donat.* 7.53 (101).

<sup>56</sup> Sozomen, *H. E.* 2.17.

<sup>57</sup> One of the latest monographs on infant baptism is by Joachim Jeremias, *Die Kindertaufe in den Ersten Vier Jahrhunderten* (Göttingen 1958). Jeremias feels that a distinction must be drawn between the early practice of baptizing children born of later-converted parents and that of baptizing Christian-born infants. The latter practice, he feels, goes back to the first half of the first century (pp. 48-60). Even though the evidence for the

baptism; Cyprian likewise felt that infants should be baptized as early as possible to benefit from the grace involved, and Gregory Nazianzus thought it preferable to be "unconsciously sanctified" than to depart "uninitiated." The *Apostolic Constitutions* while enjoining infant baptism, at the same time deplores the policy of delaying baptism lest one should sin and later defile it.<sup>58</sup> Augustine is, of course, much involved in the whole question because of its close relationship to the problem of original sin. In a somewhat backhanded way he actually cites, as a convincing argument that man inherits the sin of Adam, the fact that the Church had so long advocated infant baptism!<sup>59</sup> Among other things, he apparently felt called upon to justify the strange vicarious validity of the intention of the sponsors in this *ex-opere-operato* rite. The quotation of the entire passage will reveal that the explanation labors with some difficulty:

Now the regenerating Spirit is possessed in common both by the parents who present the child and by the infant that is presented and is born again; wherefore, in virtue of this participation in the same Spirit, the will of those who present the infant is useful to the child. But when the parents sin against the child by presenting him to the false gods of the heathen, and attempt to bring him under impious bonds unto those false gods, there is not such community of souls subsisting between the parents to the child that the guilt of one party can be common to both alike. For we are not made partakers of guilt along with others through their will in the same way as we are made partakers of grace along with others through the unity of the Holy Spirit because the one Holy Spirit can be in two different persons without their knowing in respect to each other that by Him grace is the common possession of both.<sup>60</sup>

On the whole, the sacrament of baptism seems, at least in certain situations, quite operative in its own right. It might be helpful

---

continued practice of child baptism tends to grow less and less until in the fourth century late baptisms seem the most conspicuous, child baptism still apparently remains the normal (p. 110). The popularity of Hippolytus' *Apostolical Constitutions*, for example, argues strongly for the continued approval of early baptism through the third and fourth centuries.

<sup>58</sup>Iren. *c. Haer.* 2.22.4; Cyprian, *Ep.* 58; Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 40.17, 28; *Constit. Apost.* 6.15. See Jeremias, *op.cit.* 115.

<sup>59</sup>August. *Sermo* 174.8; See also *De Peccat. Meritis et Remis, et de Bapt. Parvul.* 1.21-70 and *Sermo* 293.10.

<sup>60</sup>August. *Ep.* 98.2. See also Jeremias, *op.cit.* 86.

here to recall that Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria, "on finding that the exact routine of the church had been accurately observed," recognized the validity of a mock baptism in play and that the Council of Arles made the efficacy of the sacrament depend solely upon the form and not the personalities involved.

Strangely enough, the tendency to delay baptism until one's adult years has been cited as evidence that the sacrament is taking on more and more an *ex-opere-operato* connotation. Late baptism, supposedly justified by no theological warrant, is supported by a magical misunderstanding of the nature of the sacrament. As a blanket, *ex-opere-operato* erasure of all one's past offenses and proclivities it was supposedly being interpreted more as a magical panacea than as a Christian rite advancing grace.<sup>61</sup>

Ordination is another example where the *ex-opere-operato* efficiency of a sacrament can exclude the intention and disposition of the candidate. Forced ordinations, which seem quite relevant as evidence here, are not at all uncommon in the early post-Nicene church. Basil was tricked into an unwilling ordination by John Chrysostom. He defended his deceit — to the humorous discomfiture of later puritanical Christian editors — on the grounds than an occasional duplicity in arranging for the means to suit the ends is quite justifiable. One Dracontius swore he would run away if he were ordained; Athanasius had to persuade him to return and perform his duties. A certain Nilammon died rather than accept a bishopric; and a monk, Ammon by name, after vainly cutting off his ear to forestall ordination, threatened to cut out his tongue as well to foil his persistant nominators; one Ephraim acted like a madman so his abductors would turn him loose. Epiphanius ordained Jerome's brother against his will after a little roughing-up and gagging helped soften him. Gregory Nazianzus grieved over his ordination and referred to it as an act of tyranny.<sup>62</sup> Augustine promised not to ordain a certain person

<sup>61</sup>So says Jeremias, *op.cit.* 115. That late baptism was thought of as a quasi-magical panacea demands further evidence than Jeremias affords, especially in view of the fact that repeated forgiveness of all sins committed after baptism was an accepted development in the penitential system since the third century.

<sup>62</sup>John Chrys. *De Sacer.* 1.6-7; Basil, *Ep.* 188.10; Sozomen *H. E.* 8.19, 6.30, 3.16; Jerome, *Ep.* 51.1; Greg. Naz. *Car. de Vita Sua* 345.

against his will despite any clamor from the people, remembering, no doubt, how he was dragged weeping before the bishop when his own ordination was demanded. Martin of Tours was torn from his cell and conducted to ordination under guard. While some of these episodes may involve nothing more than feigned reluctance for the sake of the record, it is clear in others that the sincerely averse disposition of the victim could not block the valid operation of the sacrament.<sup>63</sup>

We need not recall here at length the fruitless Donatist attempt to discredit ordinations which were performed by "traditores". Like heretical baptism, where the spiritual condition of the administrator is irrelevant, ordination administered by "traitors" likewise was judged efficacious.

In general it is well to remember that the action or effect produced by baptism and ordination is claimed to be so objective and permanent that it cannot be affected or effaced by any possible later change in the recipient's disposition. Nor can these sacraments be repeated, because they confer an indelible seal. Among others, Cyril speaks of this indissoluble seal and Gregory Nazianzus advises that infants be "sealed unto God" and "initiated" early "for a sheep that is sealed is not easily snared but that which is unmarked is an easy prey to thieves." In another passage he assures us that different baptizers may use, as it were, various metaled rings to imprint the seal but that the seal is the same.<sup>64</sup>

The Eucharist, too, is quite independent in its own right. Some Fathers maintain, as we have noted, that the change in the elements, whatever it may be, is a not a gradual one dependent upon the eating by the communicant but a sudden one thanks to the *ex-opere-operato* force of the sacrament itself released by the words of the celebrant. Once these words are spoken, the effect is permanent and the "new" substance exists quite objectively or independently of the persons involved. The reserved Eucharist is a case in point: it is transported as viaticum to the sick, carried

<sup>63</sup>One set of circumstances which seems to be able to annul an ordination otherwise properly given is a legal one. The sixteenth canon of Nicaea, for instance, declares that an ordination is void if one bishop ordains a person from another's diocese without the second bishop's permission.

<sup>64</sup>Cyril, *Procat.* 17; *Constit. Apos.* 3.16; Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 40.17, 28, 15, 26.

in wicker baskets and vessels of glass, kept at home, paraded about the streets, and the like. One woman was prevented by fire issuing from the box in which she kept the sacred elements from opening it with unworthy hands.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, the Eucharist is conceived of as a foreign element entering, mingling with, and affecting the recipient's body. Gregory of Nyssa informs us that Christ's immortal Body, by being within a communicant, changes his body "to its very nature by being transfused through the vitals by eating and drinking."<sup>66</sup> By union with the immortal Man, man becomes a sharer in His incorruption. To Cyril of Jerusalem's belief that the body and blood of Christ physically enter our members Angus compares that of the author of the *Clementine Homilies*, who explains how extraneous evil spirits, having gained entrance to our bodies through food, hide themselves a long time before uniting themselves with our soul.<sup>67</sup> John Chrysostom emphasizes the realism in the Eucharist by resorting to language which to the uninitiated would sound like cannibalism.<sup>68</sup> As a matter of fact, the Eucharist is so entirely independent of the spirit of the communicant that it can work to even his undeserved discomfiture—to say nothing of any discomfiture deserved by an unworthy reception. Augustine records, as a case of divine intervention, the episode of a girl spitting out the Eucharist as a warning to older people of their wrong-doing; and Cyprian relates the deadly results the elements of the Supper visited upon a young girl who had not yet reached the years of discretion.<sup>69</sup> Apparently the Eucharist worked independently of dispositions — whether adversely or profitably we shall never know — also in the case of an eighteen-month old dying infant in Sicily.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>65</sup>On reserved Eucharist: Euseb. *H. E.* 6.46; Dionysius of Alexandria, *Ep. ad Fab.* 11; Justin, *Apol.* 1.65; Basil, *Ep.* 93; Jerome, *Ep.* 125.20; Athanasius, *Apol. c. Arian.* 11; Cyprian, *De Lapsis* 25, 26.

<sup>66</sup>Greg. Nyss. *Orat. Cat. Magna* 37.

<sup>67</sup>Angus, *op.cit.* 132.

<sup>68</sup>John Chrys. *Hom. in Joh.* 46.3.

<sup>69</sup>August. *Ep.* 98.4; Cyprian, *De Lapsis* 25.

<sup>70</sup>Jeremias, *op.cit.* 106.

*Compulsion of Divine Response*

Having dealt with the *ex-opere-operato* virtue of certain rites in so far as they operate at least to some degree independently of the persons involved, we turn now to the third and last part of our study, investigating the proposition that God is compelled to act at the bidding of the ritualistic word and act.

At first thought there might appear to be an inconsistency in associating the third proposition of this study with the first; if a word or sign is self-virtuous, it should not need to acquire its efficaciousness by any operation of a deity. But the Fathers are not necessarily contradictory in maintaining both positions. The paradox is solved if one recalls that magic is an art which claims to produce effects both by mastering secret forces in nature and by compelling the assistance of supernatural beings.

The importance of gnosis calculated to control the deity is, as we have seen, not a pervading concept in classical paganism; certainly it is not so in Judaism. Such a concept is rather the hallmark of the mysteries. Evidence for the presence of this idea in Christianity is quite abundant and convincing even if it be at times somewhat oblique and hidden. Strangely, pagan critics of Christianity are not as helpful in the case as one might hope for; they do not seem to have sensed fully the vulnerability of Christianity as a system which freely supplied "magical" tricks to compel the divine.<sup>71</sup> In the surroundings of the new pagan theurgy probably the idea did not strike them as particularly strange. On the whole, the Fathers, too, are disappointing if one expects them to write any sustained logical treatise on the kinds of problems involved in a study of comparative religion. Had they been so oriented they would surely have taken great pains to point out that Christianity was unique by furnishing a thorough analysis of the differences between the kind of compulsive magic associated with the mysteries and that involved in the religion of Christ.

<sup>71</sup>There are only two great sustained criticisms of Christianity by pagans. Porphyry is, of course, largely lost. As a late Neo-Platonist he would probably have seen nothing too unusual or criminal in any attempt of man to compel the action of deity. The identification of Celsus, the other great critic of Christianity, might be helpful in explaining his relative silence. But the stripe of his thought was a tantalizing puzzle already to Origen.

There is throughout the Fathers a consistent and necessary assumption that the sign of a sacrament is initiated and completed at the bidding of the officiant and that God responds simultaneously with this sign, provided, of course, that the proper form is employed. The very use of the word "sign" indicates that they understood that "aliud est sacramentum, aliud virtus sacramenti; aliud videtur, aliud intelligitur."<sup>72</sup> Cyril, in making a clear distinction between the outward sign and the inward grace of baptism, says: "when you are about to go down into the water, do not pay attention to the mere nature of the water but expect salvation by the operation of the Holy Ghost."<sup>73</sup> Ambrose as well as other Fathers stoutly maintains that it is not the water but the grace of God which cleanses.<sup>74</sup> Gregory of Nyssa explains the regenerative power of the water and the sacramental act by the incomprehensible operation of God and exclaims in mystic exaltation: "how great and wonderful it is that it (faith and water) should imply relationship with Deity itself." He further assures those who demand proof of the presence of God when He is invoked for the sanctification of the baptismal process, that Christians know He is "present in that process as often as He is invoked."<sup>75</sup> Augustine marvels at God's cooperation with even a murderer by sanctifying the oil in answer to the words which proceed out of his mouth as a priest.<sup>76</sup> In exorcism the power of casting out demons is always pictured as a direct gift of the benevolence and grace of God indiscriminately and spontaneously bestowed when needed upon clergy, laymen, soldiers, and even women.<sup>77</sup>

That it is God Himself who operates in conjunction with Christian rituals was one of the main arguments used consistently to justify the efficacy of religious functions performed by unworthy ministers. Augustine in supporting this thesis insisted that it is not the celebrant who actually baptizes but Christ Himself: "Therefore whoever

<sup>72</sup>August. *Hom.* 26.11 (on John), *Hom.* 3.12 (on John).

<sup>73</sup>Cyril, *Cat.* 3.4.

<sup>74</sup>Ambr. *De Myster.* 3-4.

<sup>75</sup>Greg. Nyss. *In Bapt. Christi; Orat. Cat. Magna* 36, 34.

<sup>76</sup>August. *De Bapt. c. Donat.* 5.20 (28).

<sup>77</sup>See *Constit. Apost.* 8.26; Justin, *Apol.* 1.68, *Dial c. Tryph.* 85; Tert. *De Idol.* 111, *De Cor. Milit.* 11, *De Anima* 47, *De Spect.* 26, *De Prae. adv. Haer.* 40; Origen, *c. Cels.* 7.57.

the man be and whatever office he bear who administers the ordinance, it is not he who baptizes; that is the work of Him upon whom the Dove descended." He upholds an ordination as valid even if the candidate be unworthy since he can, as a priest, impart what is true even if he be not himself truthful because he does not give what is his but what is God's.<sup>78</sup> Chrysostom, speaking to the same point, instructs us that it is not man who introduces anything into the sacred elements but God, and it is He "who initiates you into the mysteries."<sup>79</sup> In the Eucharist even a greater demand is made upon the Deity since God's immediate presence, in some form or other, can be demanded by the words of consecration. Apparently, God has little choice but to respond. To any pagan convert from the mysteries it doubtless appeared quite in order that the Christian priest, too, should be able to conjure up the attention and response of deity when he employed the proper "magical" incantation.

Indeed all around, our pagan would feel comfortably at home in his new religious surroundings; in a familiar way he seemingly saw efficacy attaching to names, set words, and prescribed signs all used in a rehearsed way by the priest; he apparently witnessed sacramental rituals often blindly operating with a minimal part played at times by the intent of the officiant or the inner condition of the recipient; and he again reverenced a God who was constrained to act and dispense His grace and presence at the order of man. Undoubtedly his ingenuity was taxed to discover any objective differences between the good old pagan magic in the mystery religions and the new mystic efficacy in the Christian dispensation. Like his old magic, the new processes, too, seemed automatically to realize the effect which they signified.<sup>80</sup> It is not strange that Christianity should be taken for a mystery religion.<sup>81</sup> But if Angus is correct in assigning the decay of the mystery religions — and their consequent inability to compete with Christianity — to their lethal alliance with magic and astronomy, we are at some sort of an impasse unless we can discover some saving

<sup>78</sup>August. *Ep. 89.5, c. Litt. Petil. 3.35.*

<sup>79</sup>John Chrys. *Hom. 8.2* (on I Corinthians).

<sup>80</sup>See J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (New York 1959) 426; Angus, *op.cit.* 254.

<sup>81</sup>See O. Casel, *op.cit.* (*supra* n. 6) 127 f.

difference between Christian wonder-working and pagan hocus-pocus.

The difference is really a fundamental one, even if our pagan friend did not discover it nor the Christian Fathers, for that matter, exploit it to their full advantage. Had the latter done so there would have been no need to resort to some of the dangerous and inane explanations they used in explaining away similarities between the mysteries and Christianity.<sup>82</sup> It would have been far more convincing for Justin, for example, rather than explaining that demons copied the Christian Eucharistic mysteries — quibus-dam verbis additis — and betrayed them to Mithra, simply to point out the fundamental difference in the “magic” between the two. Christianity remains unique, with the exception of Judaism, in having a truly historical revelation featuring a distinct standing legal contract with its Deity — a contract which not only guarantees divine cooperation but actually enjoins a command to presume upon it and, at the same time, thoughtfully furnishes evidence through miracles that the Deity is able to honor his agreement. Magic is occult and knows no divine contract; it is unilateral and arises from man’s ingenuity.

Despite the fact that they do not use the contract theory effectively in rebuttal against pagans, the Fathers call attention to it consistently throughout their pages. The *Apostolic Constitutions* remind us that baptism is given at the command of Christ and that the oil sanctified in the name of the Lord makes the candidate worthy of baptism by freeing him from all ungodliness according to the command of the Only Begotten.<sup>83</sup> Cyprian is clearly aware that Christians act through an injunction. In deplored the use of only water in the Eucharist, he reminds the offenders that if they are obligated to keep even the least of the Lord’s commandments, certainly they are forbidden to infringe upon such an important one as that involved in the very sacrament of the Lord’s passion by changing the tradition of the sacrament

<sup>82</sup>See “Quid Athenae Hierosolymis?” *CJ* 51 (1956) 153-161.

<sup>83</sup>*Constit. Apost.* 7.42,43.

<sup>84</sup>Cyprian, *Ep.* 62.14.

into anything other than what was divinely appointed.<sup>84</sup> Basil actually speaks of baptism as a covenant given by the Lord for our resurrection from the dead.<sup>85</sup>

The clever Gregory of Nyssa reminds us that because the prayer of invocation anticipates the divine intention, it is proof enough that what is done is effected by God because God has promised to be present in the rite of baptism. In fact, he has promised always to be present with those who call upon Him. He has, as Christians believe, endowed the baptismal act with His power, and therefore one should not "remain incredulous and have an eye only for the outward and visible as if that which is operated corporeally concurred not with the fulfillment of God's promise." To attest the truthfulness of His promise to cooperate by being present in all the baptismal processes and by making them effective, He has worked miracles.<sup>86</sup> Cyril, likewise, interprets miracles as conclusive evidence that God is able to cooperate when called upon.<sup>87</sup> In fine, the idea of a divine contract with man in Christianity is an obvious one and need not be labored.

If, then, Christians attribute efficacy to words and signs and if *ex-opere-operato* rites seem to command God's response, it is because the Deity of His own volition has commanded man to presume upon His cooperation and omnipotence. The virtue necessary to make baptism and the Eucharist effective is guaranteed in distinct New Testament injunctions. In the case of penance a covenant and command is enjoined in the power of the keys; the right and force to cast out devils is abundantly promised.<sup>88</sup> Any misinterpretations, abuses, or overextensions of this delegated power are attributable more to the influence of contemporary magical paganism and to the influence of time, which has a way of overrefining legal matters into minutiae or of reducing the sublime to the humdrum, than they are to the introduction of a basic magical element into Christianity. It is clearly not magical hocus-pocus or even presumptuous effrontery to draw payment on

<sup>85</sup>Basil, *De Spiritu San.* 15.35.

<sup>86</sup>Greg. Nyss. *Orat. Cat. Magna* 34, 33.

<sup>87</sup>Cyril, *Cat.* 22.1; Per Lundberg, *op.cit.* 20f.

<sup>88</sup>Among many such citations: Mark 16:15-18; Luke 9:1, 10:17.

a permanent blank check at the express command of your Father. No classical god, as we have seen,<sup>89</sup> or mystery deity that we know of, has been so lavish in his concern and so legal-minded as to have his contracts put in writing.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
*April 1960*

<sup>89</sup>See *supra* notes 2 and 3.

# A Shipwreck on the Dalmatian Coast and Some Gold Coins of Romanus III Argyrus

*Michael Metcalf*

OLD COINS OF ROMANUS III have frequently been found in central Dalmatia. They have come particularly from the upland districts of that province, rather than from the coasts or islands. The abbé Bulić, who directed the archaeological museum at Split from 1884 until 1926, twice commented on the fact that pieces of this particular emperor were often found. Single finds and small hoards, he said, had been discovered throughout the whole of central Dalmatia, but particularly in the uplands.<sup>1</sup> The gold of Romanus III (1028-34) is not common; the only provenance recorded by Mosser in his *Bibliography* is the important Sofia hoard of 1897, deposited in the reign of Alexius I.

Byzantine gold of whatever period is far from plentiful in Dalmatian finds. The only eleventh century hoard is an unpublished one from the time of Alexius I (1081-1118), represented by a few coins recently acquired by the Split museum. Such Byzantine hoards as are known are characteristically either from the islands or from the little ports along the coast. The Dubrovnik find of 1892 and that from the site of ancient Narona in the lower Neretva valley, discovered about 1901, belong to the group associated with the ports<sup>2</sup>; a Beneventan solidus struck in the name of Charlemagne,

<sup>1</sup>F. Bulić, in *Bullettino di Archeologia e Storia Dalmata* 18 (1895) 78, where he says, 'E da notari che in varii incontri furono trovati in tutta la Dalmazia media monete d'oro di questo imperatore, ma specialmente nella parte montana della provincia'; and the same, 'Un piccolo ripostiglio di monete bizantine', *BASD* 36 (1913) 60, where three further find spots are listed.

<sup>2</sup>See S. McA. Mosser, *A Bibliography of Byzantine Coin Hoards* (New York 1935), for references. (Dubrovnik under Ragusa.) The list of ports may be extended by adding the bronze coins found at Durrës (Durazzo) in 1924 (attributed to Basil; *Albania* [1925] 28f.) and at Senj before 1863 (John I [or successors?]; *Archiv xxix*, 336).

found at Trogir in 1937,<sup>3</sup> may be classed with them. Two island finds of sixth and seventh century gold have been recorded from Krk and Brač.<sup>4</sup> The parcel recently acquired at Split comes from Korčula.<sup>5</sup>

Finds of gold from the hinterland are rare. The only such eleventh century Byzantine coin from Jugoslavia of which I know is a nomisma of Alexius I, discovered at Trebinje in the Herzegovina.<sup>6</sup> Valentini remarked that stray finds of nomismata in northern Albania were not as commonly known as one might expect, considering the esteem in which the coins were held by peasants in modern times.<sup>7</sup>

Some explanation for the finds of Romanus III was obviously required. Bulić suggested that the interior of the province of Dalmatia in the eleventh century was more prosperous and was the scene of greater commercial activity than the coast. This explanation does not seem very probable but it shows that Bulić felt clear about the facts.

Cedrenus chronicles an incident which affords a much more likely explanation. In the year 1040, when the emperor Michael IV was at Salonia, John "Orphanotrophos", his brother and chief minister of state, sent him ten centenaria of gold by ship. The action sufficiently characterizes the two men: while Michael visited the tomb of St. Demetrius and made widespread gifts of money in the hope of a providential improvement in his health, John was concerning himself energetically with the administration of the empire and its finances. The gold very possibly would have been used to defray the expenses of Michael's Bulgarian campaign; but the ship

<sup>3</sup>The coin is now in the Split museum. I am indebted to the Director for the courtesy with which the accession registers were made available to me.

<sup>4</sup>For the Krk hoard, see *Viestnik Hrvatskoga Arheološkoga Družstva* 4 (1882) 124f.; and for the Brač hoard, J. Klemenc, 'Nalazi novaca u Jugoslaviji, 1910–1936', *Numizmatika* 2-4 (1934-6) 124ff.

<sup>5</sup>There are four coins, of Romanus IV, Michael VII and Alexius I. It seems likely that most if not all of the sixteen solidi of Theophilus described by I. Marović in 'Zlatnici cara Theofila u numizmatičkoj zbirci arheološkog muzeja u Splitu', *Vjesnik za Arh. i Hist. Dalmatinsku* 55 (1953) 213ff., are from a single discovery.

<sup>6</sup>The coin was acquired by the Zagreb archaeological museum. I am indebted to Professor M. Gorenc for the courtesy with which he made the numismatic accession registers available to me for study.

<sup>7</sup>G. Valentini, 'La numismatica in Albania (esperienze di un collezionista)', *Numismatica* 5 (1939) 122ff.

was caught in a storm and was wrecked on the Illyrian coast. Stefan Voislav, the ruler of Zeta, is said to have appropriated the treasure and ignored a letter from the emperor threatening war if the gold was not returned. In doing so, he was taking the opportunity to join in a more general movement of revolt among the Slavonic peoples of the western part of the Balkan peninsula. The object of the uprising was no doubt to take advantage of the death of Basil II ("the Bulgar-slayer") in 1025 and of the weakness of the rulers who succeeded him. The mountains which lie between the Vardar valley and the Adriatic are a difficult territory in which to campaign. An army sent against Stefan Voislav under the command of Georgios Provatas, Cedrenus reports, was lost without having achieved its aim.<sup>8</sup> The treasure doubtless remained in the hands of the Slavs. It seems more than likely that the Dalmatian finds of coins of Romanus III once formed a part of it.

Five of that emperor's nomismata were discovered at Gornje Ogorje in or shortly before 1895 in the neighbourhood of the Stari Gaj (the Old Wood), and 13 more were subsequently reported to have been found nearby. Ogorje is a small village in the hills twenty miles north of Split, not easily accessible from the coast.<sup>9</sup> Another hoard was found in 1912 in the Sinjskopolje (where the Split airport now is). The exact locality was given as Jabuka, on the hill Osoj. Jabuka and Osoj are both common placenames in Dalmatia, so that it is difficult to be certain of the spot to which Bulić was referring. It may have been the hill Osoje, near Gala.<sup>10</sup> Eight nomismata were found; they all passed into private collections.<sup>11</sup> Single finds are recorded from Dugo Polje, a village about ten miles northeast of Split, from the Poljica, a hilly district between Split and the lower Cetina valley, and from the little island of Biševo.<sup>12</sup> All five localities are within the orbit

<sup>8</sup>Cedrenus II, 527.

<sup>9</sup>Its exact location is 43.44 N., 16.28 E. The best detailed gazetteer of Jugoslavia is Yugoslavia. Index gazetteer showing place names in I:100,000 map series, 7 vols. (Cairo 1944).

<sup>10</sup>If so, the location is 43.43 N., 16.44 E.

<sup>11</sup>See J. Klemenc, *op.cit.*

<sup>12</sup>The findspot is given as Dugopolje by Bulić. Once again, it is a common name; the reference would have been much more satisfactory if the position had been more adequately described. The village of Dugo Polje ten miles from Split is located 43.35 N., 16.37 E. The Poljica is presumably the district at about 43.30 N., 16.40 E. Biševo, which was formerly called Busi, is at 42.58 N., 16.0 E.

of Split, so that at first glance one might think that the shipwreck was probably on the coast nearby. But they are likewise within the orbit of the Split museum, which would be more likely to acquire finds which came from the neighbourhood than those made at a greater distance. If similar coins had been found further to the south, they might well have escaped the record. One other coin of which the provenance may be significant is mentioned below. The distribution of the finds cannot be said, then, to offer clear evidence of the scene of the shipwreck. It is perhaps just worth pointing out that a ship making the direct crossing of the Adriatic from Pescara might be expected to pass close to Biševo or Vis.<sup>13</sup>

There are specimens of the gold of Romanus III in most national collections. The Vienna cabinet has six, for example, all acquired before 1875, and there are nine at Budapest, which are also early accessions. Few if any have provenances.<sup>14</sup> Under the ticket of one of the coins in the British Museum (*BMC* 2) there is, however, a note which reads, "One similar specimen found in Servia shown at B.M. 1904." The boundary of Serbia in 1904 lay a good hundred miles from Split at the nearest, and in any case the exact find-spot is not recorded, so that there are insufficient grounds for seeing any connection with the treasure-ship. One coin of Romanus III has been published from Transylvania. It was found at Caransebes, in the Timisoara district, before the first world war.<sup>15</sup> As is usual in monetary studies of the earlier middle ages, many more provenances would be welcome.

Michael IV had been emperor for six years at the time of the Dalmatian shipwreck and yet none of his coins have been reported from Dalmatia, either in the hoards of Ogorje and Jabuka or separately. His nomismata are scarcer than those of Romanus; there

<sup>13</sup>Cf. John's remark about the Roman republic, Cedrenus, *loc.cit.* The Via Valeria, running east from Rome, reached the Adriatic at Pescara. It is a little surprising that Voislav should have controlled, as apparently he was thought to do, territory so far afield as Dalmatia: we have only the Byzantine statement that the gold fell into his hands, and he may have been willing to take any pretext for an attack on the army sent against him. The few details which are known about eleventh century Serbian history have recently been discussed by V. Laurent, in 'Le thème byzantin de Serbie au XIe siècle', *Revue des études Byzantines* 15 (1957) 185ff.

<sup>14</sup>I must thank Dr. Koch and Dr. Fülep for their help.

<sup>15</sup>*Numizmatikai Közlöny* 13 (1914) 26; and see I. Sabău, 'Circulatia monetară în Transilvania secolelor XI-XIII, în lumina izovoarelor numismaticice', *Studii și Cercetări de Numismatică* 2 (1958) 269ff.

were none in the Sofia hoard.<sup>16</sup> Gold may have been struck only for Michael's official and ceremonial requirements and not in quantity for general circulation. In any case, the preservation of a large store of gold in the imperial treasury must often have resulted in the drawing of sums in old coin to meet some heavy expense such as that of a campaign.

The single pieces and small hoards from Dalmatia, where there was no regular monetary economy employing coinage (as is shown by the absence of finds of petty coins) and where the gold of other emperors does not occur, suggest that these nomismata, acquired by some particular chance, were treasured by the people living in the hinterland as medals, or for the social esteem which their possession conferred, or at any rate for reasons not connected with the commercial use of coinage. Novak has discussed in detail the way in which Slavs and Latins lived side by side in Dalmatia.<sup>17</sup> He argues that from early times the Latin element in the population was small, and that Split, among other towns, was "slavicised" well before the time with which we are here concerned. The distribution of coin finds of Romanus III, taken together with the find spots of other Byzantine hoards, shows how closely the trade and monetary affairs of Dalmatia were confined to the little communities of the seaboard and to the islands, and offers a reminder that it was not until the late middle ages that there were many commercial contacts with the hinterland.<sup>18</sup> It is characteristic of the extent of Byzantine Dalmatia that when the inhabitants of Salona abandoned their city and fled to the safety afforded by the

<sup>16</sup>The best account of the hoard is in *Comptes rendus de l'académie des inscriptions et belles lettres*, 4th Series, 25 (1897) 303f, but it awaits proper publication. Note that P. Grierson's analyses of fineness ('The debasement of the bezant in the eleventh century', *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 47 [1954] 379ff) confirm the traditional attributions to Romanus III and Michael IV and add the tetarteron, formerly given to Romanus IV, to Romanus III's issues.

<sup>17</sup>V. Novak, 'The Slavonic-Latin symbiosis in Dalmatia during the middle ages', *Slavonic and East European Review* 32 (1954) Iff.

<sup>18</sup>But the peace treaty of 1186 between Ragusa and the Grand Župan suggests that trade may have reached further than the circulation of coinage. The middle ages afford other examples of the restriction of monetary transactions to the ports where trader and producer met. The peace treaty is printed in S. Ljubić, *Listine o odnošajih između južnoga slavenstva i mletačke republike* vol. i (1868) No. XVII, and in *Monumenta Hungariae Historica, Diplomataria* vol. xi, 105. The latter version includes the agreement that at Portus Narentis 'denarios tollatur, per quos antea acceptum fuit.'

walls of Diocletian's palace, the site which was menaced by the Slavs was still within their view.

The numismatist cannot often show connections between deposits of coins and specific events, although he may suspect them.<sup>19</sup> It is gratifying, therefore, that a story of shipwreck can be attached to the coins of Romanus III from the Split museum. In 1177 there was another instance of misadventure on the Dalmatian coast about which interesting numismatic evidence has survived to our own day, although this time by means of a document. Some pirates from the neighborhood of Šibenik attacked a ship which was sailing down the Adriatic and overreached themselves so far as to rob a cardinal and apostolic legate. They called down on the heads of the Archbishop of Split and the Bishop of Trogir the displeasure of Alexander III, who threatened the whole district of Sibenik with a general interdict, excluding only penance and infant baptism, if the cardinal's belongings were not returned. A clerk drew up a list of the missing goods, among which various kinds of coin were named: *sterlingi*, *tarreni*, and *oboli masmutini* as well as *perperi* were among them.<sup>20</sup> If one day an English "Cross-and-Crosslets" penny is dug up in, for example, Rogoznica, we shall know that the cardinal did not recover all his goods.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY  
February 1960

<sup>19</sup>There is bound to be a certain amount of inference in any such connection; the degree of uncertainty depends on the accuracy with which the coins can be dated. A. Blanchet ('Les rapports entre les dépôts monétaires et les événements militaires, politiques et économiques. III. IV.', *Revue Numismatique* 4, xxxix [1936] 205ff) in writing about the French feudal coinages, where chronology is notoriously difficult, indulges in flagrant circular argument to arrive at connections which no doubt are correct.

<sup>20</sup>See *Monumenta Hungariae Historica, Diplomataria xi*, nos. 77-8, pp. 124ff.

# Erasmus and the Aldine Academy of Venice

*A Neglected Chapter in the Transmission  
of Graeco-Byzantine Learning to the West\**

*Deno J. Geanakoplos*

A PROBLEM AT ONCE VITAL and insufficiently examined in Medieval and Renaissance intellectual history is that of the transmission of Greek learning from the Byzantine East to Italy and its subsequent diffusion to various parts of Western Europe. Increasing attention to be sure is being given to the activities in southern Italy of such figures as Nicholas, Abbot of the Greek monastery of Casole, to Barlaam and Pilatus who, with hardly notable success, taught Petrarch and Boccaccio, and to the more fruitful instruction in Florence of the Byzantines Chrysoloras, Argyropoulos, and Chalcondyles.<sup>1</sup> But inadequate study has been devoted to the intellectual role of Venice, which at the close of the fifteenth and early part of the sixteenth century was the leading *foyer* of Hellenism in all Europe.<sup>2</sup>

\* This paper was read in Washington, December, 1958, at the annual dinner meeting of the Mediaeval Academy of America. I am grateful to Professors P. Kristeller and M. Gilmore for helpful comments on the present version.

<sup>1</sup>For such a major problem as the transmission of Greek learning to the West, especially Italy, surprisingly few works of synthesis have been written. Notable are the recent ones of G. Cammelli, *I dotti bizantini e le origini dell'umanesimo I, Manuele Crisolora* (Florence 1941); II, *Giovanni Argiropulo* (Florence 1941); III, *Demetrio Calcondila* (Florence 1954); and "Andronico Callisto," *Rinascita* 23-24 (1942) 1-61. Also B. Knös, *Un ambassadeur de l'hellénisme: Janus Lascaris et la tradition greco-byzantine dans l'humanisme français* (Paris-Upsala 1945). More recently, K. Setton, "The Byzantine Background to the Italian Renaissance," *Proceedings of the*

Situated between East and West, Venice from at least the ninth century had been especially receptive to Byzantine economic and, to a certain degree, cultural influences. We may cite in this connection establishment in the heart of Constantinople of the Venetian merchant colony, which in the twelfth century numbered more than 20,000 persons, but the importance of which as a medium of cultural exchange has not yet been fully exploited by historians.<sup>3</sup> Greeks and Venetians were brought into even closer contact as a result of the Fourth Crusade of 1204, which sacked Constantinople and established a Venetian Empire on the ruins of the Byzantine state, but which at the same time made the Greeks bitterly resentful of the Venetians. It was not until after the Council of Florence in 1438-39<sup>4</sup> and especially the Turkish conquest of Constantinople in 1453 that Venice, no longer in Greek eyes the notorious oppressor of the crusades, became a veritable refuge and center of opportunity for many displaced educated Greeks. These refugees from Constantinople, Crete and other Venetian possessions found in Venice a *milieu* favorable to their abilities. And in return they benefited the state not only in their capacity as merchants but, more important, as teachers of Greek

*American Philosophical Society* 100 (1956) 1-76. On Barlaam and Pilatus see Setton, *op.cit.* 41-45, A. Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire* (Madison 1952) 713-22 and G. Schiro's articles in *Archivio storico per la Calabria e la Lucania*, vols. 1, 2, 5, 6 and 8. On Nicholas of Casole see P. Sambin, *Il Vescovo Crotonese Niccolò da Durazzo e un inventario di suoi codici latini e greci* (1276) (Rome 1954); and R. Weiss, "The Greek Culture of South Italy in the Later Middle Ages," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 37 (1951) 23-50. Still basic for Greek transmission are E. Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique ou description raisonnée des ouvrages publiés en grec par des grecs au XVe et XVIe siècles* (Paris 1885) and R. Sabbadini, *Le scoperte dei codici latini e greci nei secoli XIV e XV*, 2 vols. (Florence 1905-14). Also, V. Rossi, *Il Quattrocento* (Milan 1933) esp. bibl. on 62-66. On the twelfth century see C. H. Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science* (Cambridge, Mass. 1924) esp. 141-242.

<sup>2</sup>Only one work of synthesis exists on the intellectual role of Venice in this period, A. Firmin-Didot, *Alde Manuce et l'Hellénisme à Venise* (Paris 1875). But besides containing a considerable number of errors, it focuses exclusively on Aldus and his publications, and, as a factual presentation, offers little analysis of the problems of Greek transmission (e.g., only brief references are made to Erasmus in Venice).

<sup>3</sup>Several works exist on the Venetian colony of Constantinople from the economic side. Haskins in *Mediaeval Science* was one of the first to attempt to discuss the Venetian (and Pisan) colony in Constantinople from the cultural point of view; Setton, *op.cit.* 22, 26, 29, also includes a brief discussion.

<sup>4</sup>See my article, "The Council of Florence (1438-39) and the Problem of Union between the Greek and Roman Churches," *Church History* (1955) 324-346, and now J. Gill, *The Council of Florence* (Cambridge, Eng. 1959).

to the Venetian educated class and members of the citizenry aspiring to civil and diplomatic posts in the East. It was the activities in Venice of this learned Greek element that helped to draw to the city a considerable number of Western European devotees of Greek studies, who on their return home themselves became agents in transmitting Greek letters to the West.

An outstanding example is the Venetian sojourn of the celebrated Erasmus — an episode which, surprisingly enough, has never been carefully investigated for its significance in the dissemination of Greek.<sup>5</sup> It is the purpose of this essay to examine the visit of Erasmus to Venice, in particular his associations with the noted Venetian printer Aldus Manutius and Aldus' Greek Academy, with its nucleus of Byzantine scholars. Special attention will be focused on the Venetian edition of Erasmus' important work, the *Adages*, publication of which by the Aldine press was responsible for establishing Erasmus' reputation throughout Europe. From a comparison of the Greek material incorporated into the Aldine version with that included in the edition printed immediately prior to his arrival in Venice, certain data can be gathered on the degree to which the Aldine version was enriched. These observations, together with conclusions regarding his various activities in the Aldine circle, may shed light not only on Erasmus' indebtedness to the scholars of Venice but, in view of his special place in the history of Western letters, on an important link in the spread of Greek learning throughout Europe.

When Erasmus arrived in Italy in September of 1506 he had already achieved some recognition among European in-

<sup>5</sup>Several works have treated the entire three-year visit of Erasmus to Italy: the two rather brief studies of P. de Nolhac, *Erasme en Italie* (Paris 1898) and *Erasme et l'Italie* (Paris 1925); and, recently, by the eminent scholar A. Renaudet, *Erasme et l'Italie*, in *Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 15 (Geneva 1954). But the first two are inadequate on his Venetian sojourn, while Renaudet, despite the excellence of his work in providing a composite picture of the development of Erasmus' intellectual constitution, is not concerned (in the ten pages allotted to Venice) with what Erasmus acquired in the way of Greek learning from the Aldine, especially Byzantine, scholars in Venice. The principal biographies of Erasmus (see below) are brief and sketchy on his activities in Venice. J. Sandys' important *A History of Classical Scholarship* (Cambridge, Eng. 1908) devotes only a sentence or two to Erasmus' Italian visit (II 128-29). S. Nulli, *Erasmo e il Rinascimento* (Turin 1955) has little bearing on Greek studies.

tellectuals.<sup>6</sup> Through residence in Italy, however, he hoped to enhance his academic stature by obtaining a doctor's degree in theology, a requisite credential if his theological views were to receive the serious consideration of contemporary scholars.<sup>7</sup> More important, as several of his own statements attest, he went to Italy primarily to perfect his knowledge of Greek ("Italiā adivimus Graecitatis potissimum causa.")<sup>8</sup> Some proficiency in that language he had already acquired in northern Europe, partly as the result of self-instruction and partly under various teachers, among whom was George Heronymus of Sparta, according to Erasmus an instructor of little worth under whom he had read in Paris.<sup>9</sup>

To emphasize how essential Erasmus considered a knowledge of Greek, one need quote only the now famous lines he wrote to his patron Anthony of St. Bergen: "If you would drink deeply of the wellspring of wisdom apply to Greek. We have in Latin at best some small brooks and turbid pools; while the Greeks have the purest fountains and rivers flowing with gold." And in the same letter he wrote even more pointedly, ". . . Latin erudition, however ample, is crippled and imperfect without Greek."<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup>What brought him initial recognition was the first publication of his *Adages* in Paris in 1500, followed by the *Enchiridion militis christiani* in 1504 (which also drew criticism). See J. Mangan, *Life, Character and Influence of D. Erasmus of Rotterdam* (New York 1927) I, 121ff.

<sup>7</sup>See Erasmus' statement, in P. S. Allen, *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami I* (Oxford 1906) 432-33, nos. 201, 203 (hereafter Allen). English trans. in F. Nichols, *The Epistles of Erasmus I* (London 1904) 418-20 (hereafter Nichols).

<sup>8</sup>Letter to Servatius of November, 1506, in Allen I, 433; Nichols trans. I, 420. See also M. Phillips' recent *Erasmus and the Northern Renaissance* (London 1949) 56: "In Italy Erasmus had a clear conception of what he was working for, and the gap to be filled was still in the fuller knowledge of Greek." A. Tilley, *Dawn of the French Renaissance* (Cambridge, Eng. 1918) 292, affirms that on Erasmus' arrival in Italy he was a "passable Greek scholar," and that he went there "chiefly for the sake of Greek" (287-292). He also believes (290) that Erasmus did not make the most of his opportunities in Paris with regard to Greek study, perhaps because of the increasingly theological tone of the University of Paris. In Paris Erasmus does not seem to have met the Byzantine Janus Lascaris, who had already helped Guillaume Budé with his Greek.

<sup>9</sup>On Heronymus see H. Omont, "Heronyme de Sparte, maître de grec à Paris, et copiste de manuscrits (1476)", in *Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France* 12 (1885) 65-98; J. Boissonade, *Anecdota Graeca* 5 (Paris 1833) 420-26; and G. Sathas, *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία* (Athens 1868) 69, who wrongly says that Melanchthon studied with Heronymus. (On Greek studies in Paris fundamental is A. Renaudet, *Prériforme et humanisme à Paris* [Paris 1916].) For Erasmus' opinion see Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship* II, 169, note 3, quoting from Erasmus' *Catalogue of Lucubrations*, prefaced to his *Opera Omnia* (Leiden 1703).

<sup>10</sup>Allen no. 149, I, 352; Nichols I, 313.

On his arrival in Italy Erasmus' first step was to secure a degree from the University of Turin. His original intention had been to apply to the great University of Bologna, but to obtain a doctorate from that institution necessitated the possession of other scholarly titles which Erasmus had never found time to acquire.

After securing the Turin doctorate<sup>11</sup> (evidently with a minimum of effort), Erasmus proceeded to Bologna, where he was offered the hospitality of Paolo Bombasio, professor of Greek at the University there.<sup>12</sup> During a thirteen months' stay with Bombasio, Erasmus had the opportunity to meet a number of scholars and presumably to pursue the study of Greek, perhaps through attending some of Bombasio's lectures, certainly through engaging in informal discussions with his host.<sup>13</sup>

It was possibly Bombasio's suggestion that induced Erasmus, intending to leave soon for Rome, to write a letter (on the 28th of October 1507) to Europe's foremost printer, the Venetian Aldus Manutius, in which he requested publication of his Latin translation of two plays of Euripides, the *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia in Aulis*. Erasmus' letter,<sup>14</sup> a skillful combination of respect, flattery, and humility, began by complimenting Aldus<sup>15</sup> on his notable contribution to classical learning. Erasmus then struck a sympathetic note by mentioning reports that Aldus had received "no

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Mangan's explanation (*op.cit.* I, 223) that a relative of the pope was chancellor at Turin, while Bologna was then in the hands of papal enemies.

<sup>12</sup>On Bombasio, professor also of rhetoric and poetry see L. Simeoni, *Storia della Università di Bologna* 2 (Bologna 1947) 46-47, and P. de Nolhac, "Les correspondants d'Alde Manuce," *Studi e documenti di storia e diritto* 9 (1888) 230-232.

<sup>13</sup>According to a letter dated 1536 of Beatus Rhenanus (pupil and a kind of biographer of Erasmus) included in Froben's *Origen* (1536), Erasmus "when at Bologna did not attend any lectures, but, contented with the friendship of Paolo Bombasio . . . pursued his studies at home" (Allen I, 55; trans. in Nichols I, 23).

<sup>14</sup>This letter is among the fifteen discovered by Nolhac in the Vatican in 1898. Four constitute the sole correspondence we have between Erasmus and Aldus. Printed in Allen nos. 207, 209, 212, 213, I, pp. 437-442, 445-449. Trans. in Nichols I, 437-42, 445-49. Mangan, *op.cit.* I, 232, thinks dispatch of Erasmus' letter to Aldus may have been due to the influence of Carteromachus, whom Erasmus had recently met in Bologna.

<sup>15</sup>On Aldus see esp. Didot, *Alde Manuce*, the fullest account of his career and knowledge of Greek, though spotty and frequently inaccurate. Also F. Ferrigni, *Aldo Manuzio* (Milan 1925). A. Renouard, *Annales de l'imprimerie des Aldé*, 2nd. ed. (Paris 1825), 3 vols., is an excellent account of the publications of the Aldine Press. For other works, esp. on the Aldine Academy, see below.

proportionate gain" for his labors and expressed interest in Aldus' proposed Greek edition of Plato, while suggesting, interestingly enough, publication of the Greek text of the New Testament.<sup>16</sup> Subtly shifting his ground, Erasmus continued that though his two plays had already been printed in Paris (in September 1506) by Badius, he had refused Badius permission to reprint them because, to quote Erasmus' phrase, "I fear lest, as the proverb of Sophocles puts it, he will mend one mischief with another. I should think my lucubrations secure of immortality [however] if they came out printed in your type, especially the minute type which is the most elegant of all . . ." <sup>17</sup>

What the latter phrase referred to, of course, was the famous Aldino type (more commonly known as Italic), invented by Aldus.<sup>18</sup>

We know from a second letter of Erasmus that Aldus' response, which has been lost, must have been favorable.<sup>19</sup> Indeed Aldus may well have invited Erasmus to come to Venice, as may be surmised from Erasmus' plea of ill-health. Nevertheless Erasmus took care to send Aldus precise directions for the publication of his plays, the manuscript of which he now dispatched from Bologna to Venice.

In one month's time, by December 1507, the printing of the Euripidean plays was accomplished. At this juncture Erasmus, despite his originally stated intention to proceed to Rome, suddenly appeared in Venice. No letters explain the change in plan but it is probable that what persuaded him to make the journey was a desire to see published under the Aldine imprint one of his most cherished works, the *Adages*, a collection of proverbs gleaned

<sup>16</sup>The Aldine *ed. princeps* of Plato appeared in 1513. Aldus more than once had declared his intention of printing the Bible (see Nolhac, *Erasme en Italie* 98, n.4). Though he never carried this out (see C. Castellani, *La stampa in Venezia* [Venice 1889] 46, n.3 for explanation), he did publish one "polyglot" page of the Old Testament in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew (reproduced in Renouard, *Annales* III, 44).

<sup>17</sup>Allen no. 207, I, 439; and trans. Nichols I, 430.

<sup>18</sup>The old view was that the Aldine type imitated the hand of Petrarch. The generally accepted view today is that Aldus followed one of the two current book scripts of late 15th century Italy (more properly termed humanist cursive). See B. Bischoff, G. Lief tinck, G. Battelli, *Nomenclature des écritures livresques du IX au XVIe siècles* (Paris 1954) 35-43 and now B. L. Ullman, *The Origin and Development of Humanistic Script* (Rome 1960), which I have not seen.

<sup>19</sup>Allen no. 209, I, 440-442; trans. Nichols I, 432.

chiefly from various classical authors, Latin and Greek. Erasmus had begun this collection shortly after his return from England in 1500 and in June of that year at Paris<sup>20</sup> it had been first printed by Jean Philippe as a slim volume entitled *Adagiorum Collectanea*. Already in Bologna Erasmus had devoted some little care to enlarging the work, but publication of a new edition at this time could afford considerable latitude for error, especially since he had not yet finished his intended revision of the volume.<sup>21</sup> His presence then at Venice was imperative, and thus for a period of nine months, from January to September 1508, Erasmus was to be a guest in the house of Aldus.

*Whoever you are, Aldus earnestly begs you to state your business in the fewest possible words and be gone, unless, like Hercules to weary Atlas, you would lend a helping hand. There will always be enough work for you and all who come this way.*

This challenge, inscribed over the door of Aldus' print shop,<sup>22</sup> confronted Erasmus when he presented himself at what then ranked as the leading publishing house in Europe. But what was this task for which Aldus was at once admonishing and enlisting the aid of passersby? It was to print systematically and for the first time all the major Greek classics of the ancient world. This was certainly an ambitious and praiseworthy design, for even in this period of avid interest in classical antiquity no press had hitherto been established primarily devoted to such a purpose.<sup>23</sup> Indeed

<sup>20</sup>See Allen no. 124, I, 287, and no. 126, I, note. Month of publication unstated. Nichols I, 236; P. Smith, *Erasmus* (New York 1923) 41; and E. Emerton, *Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam* (New York-London 1899) 91, agree on June, while Tilley, *op.cit.* 291 and others favor July. In any case, by the time of Erasmus' arrival in Venice the 2nd ed. of the *Adages* (published by Badius in Paris, Jan. 8, 1507; cf. Tilley, *op.cit.* 292) had been out a year.

<sup>21</sup>See below text for note 55, Erasmus' own statement. Also testimony of Rhenanus (Allen I, 55 and trans. in Nichols I, 23, 28; cf. Nolhac, *Erasme en Italie*, 24).

<sup>22</sup>Trans. E. Tatham, "Erasmus in Italy," *English Historical Review* 10 (1895) 649.

<sup>23</sup>The press of the Cretan, Zacharias Callierges, was, to be sure, devoted exclusively to Greek works, but his first publication, the famous *Etymologicum Magnum*, appeared only in 1499. How long this elaborate work was under preparation and in press is obscure. See Musurus' preface to the work in *Etymologicon Magnum*, ed. T. Gaisford (Oxford 1848) p. ii.

before the opening of the Aldine press in 1494-95<sup>24</sup> only a dozen Greek books had been printed in all of Italy,<sup>25</sup> despite the rapid development of the art of printing. Moreover the now firmly established Turkish occupation of the Greek East was threatening the loss or destruction of many priceless codices. Thus Aldus, bolstered by the encouragement and financial support of two close friends, the brothers Alberto and Lionello Pio, Princes of Carpi<sup>26</sup> (a small principality situated near Ferrara), had taken steps to establish such a press.

There was only one city, however, which could fulfill all the demands of a Greek press in this period — Venice — and it attests to Aldus' judgement and breadth of vision that he was able to resist the urgings of his patrons to set up his press in their palace at Carpi and to proceed instead to Venice. Of all the Italian cities, Venice possessed the greatest fund of experience in printing. The city's first press had been established in 1469, and of the more than 5,000 books printed in Italy before 1500 over one-half were produced in Venice.<sup>27</sup>

Of further importance to Aldus must have been Venetian possession of several great libraries, especially the Marciana, the nucleus of which was the impressive collection of about 500 Greek manuscripts bequeathed to Venice by the famous Byzantine statesman-scholar, Cardinal Bessarion.<sup>28</sup> Significant too was the tradi-

<sup>24</sup>Renouard, *op.cit.* I, 2-3, cites the year 1494. But cf. V. Scholderer, *Catalogue of Books Printed in the XV Century Now in the British Museum* 5 (London 1924) p. li, who says 1495. The problem is complicated because the first Aldine works were undated; involved also is the question of the Venetian calendar: see esp. Renouard, *op.cit.* I, 2-3.

<sup>25</sup>See C. Castellani, *La Stampa in Venezia* (Venice 1889) 37. Also R. Proctor, *The Printing of Greek in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford 1900) 156.

<sup>26</sup>On Carpi and the brothers (whose preceptor Aldus had been) see H. Semper, *Carpi: Ein Fürstensitz der Renaissance* (Dresden 1882).

<sup>27</sup>The exact figure is 2,835 Venetian books, according to Sandys, *op.cit.* II, 97. Strikingly, only 10,000 in all of Europe (B. Botfield, *Prefaces to the First Editions of the Classics* [London 1861] p. LXII.) But cf. the authoritative V. Scholderer, *Printers and Readers in Italy in the 15th Century* (1949) 6-7, who believes these figures too low. He says Venice put out 4,500 editions before 1500.

<sup>28</sup>See H. Omont, "Inventaire des manuscrits grecs et latins donnés à Saint-Marc de Venise par le Cardinal Bessarion en 1468," *Revue des bibliothèques* 4 (1894) 130, who says ca. 500 MSS., and whose catalogue actually cites 482 (pp. 149-169). On Bessarion see L. Mohler, *Kardinal Bessarion als Theologe, Humanist und Staatsmann* (Paderborn 1923) and H. Vast, *Le Cardinal Bessarion. Etude sur la Chrétienté et la renaissance vers le milieu du XVe siècle* (Paris 1878).

tion of Greek studies established in Venice earlier in the fifteenth century (e.g., involving Francesco and Ermolao Barbaro), and the instruction in Greek offered by Giorgio Valla and others. Added to these factors was the presence nearby of the University of Padua, which in the fields of pure Aristotelian philosophy, medicine and, significantly, Hellenic studies, was now one of the leading universities of Western Europe.<sup>29</sup>

No small consideration was of course the economic prosperity of Venice as the center of a still flourishing empire, a fact able to guarantee a class sufficiently wealthy and with leisure to buy and read the printed classics.<sup>30</sup>

With Aldus' primary emphasis on the publication of Greek works, of especial importance, finally, was the presence in Venice of a remarkably large, thriving Greek community — an agglomeration of merchants, mercenaries and others along with a considerable number of highly educated Greeks, refugees or voluntary exiles from Crete or their Turkish-occupied homelands. Venice's position as the center of empire and traditional port of entry to the West made it the funnel through which passed most of these refugees. And as many, owing to the opportunities presented for employment, chose to remain in the city, the Greek colony of Venice increased to more than 4,500 out of what has been estimated a total Venetian population of some 110,000 people.<sup>31</sup> The Venetians accordingly were able to profit from first hand knowledge

<sup>29</sup>On Padua, in effect the state university of Venice, see Knös, *Janus Lascaris* 38 (for its libraries of Greek manuscripts); P. Molmenti, *Venice, Its Individual Growth to the Fall of the Republic* (Chicago 1907) pt. 2, I, 258-67; and J. Faccioliati, *Fasti Gymnasii Patavinii* (Padua 1757) 3 vols. N. Papadopoli, *Historia Gymnasiū Patavinī*, (Venice 1726) is often unreliable. On the development of Greek learning in Venice see my forthcoming book.

<sup>30</sup>See esp. Molmenti, *Venice* pt. 2, I, esp. 227-230, who lists the many Venetian nobles interested in letters. Cf. Didot, *Alde Manuce* 16-36.

<sup>31</sup>On the Greek colony see G. Veludo, *Sulla colonia greca orientale stabilita in Venezia. Cenni* (Venice 1847) and esp. the Greek version, 'Ελλήνων Ὀρθόδοξων ἀποικία ἐν Βενετίᾳ (Venice 1893) 6, which gives 5,000 Greeks for 1478. Cf. Knös, *Janus Lascaris* 21-30, who cites 4000 Greeks. For figures on the entire city of Venice see Molmenti, *Venice* I, pt. 2, 2, note 1. The figure I have used (110,000) is that of A. 1509. Cf. G. Beloch, "La popolazione d'Italia nei sec. XVI, XVII, e XVIII," in *Bulletin de l'Institut international de statistique* III (1888) and "La popolazione di Ven. nei sec. XVI e XVII," in *Nuovo arch. veneto*, n. s. III, p. 1. More recently, *Cities of the World B. C. 2500-A. D. 1936* (New York 1940) 12, under A. 1450 lists Venice as the West's largest city with 150,000 inhabitants, and with 158,000 in 1550.

of the Greek language. The more intellectual of the citizenry became increasingly imbued with an appreciation for the ideals of Hellenic and Byzantine learning until by the first decade of the sixteenth century Greek was better known in Venice than anywhere in the West.<sup>32</sup> Thus one Greek emigré, nostalgically contemplating the splendor of the city with its flourishing Greek community, could exclaim that Venice was "quasi alterum Byzantium."<sup>33</sup> In view of such considerations it is little wonder that Aldus chose to establish his press in the city of the lagoons.

Publication of Greek texts entailed difficulties compared to which the printing of Latin works was relatively easy. To begin with, not only had the most authentic manuscript of a particular author to be sought out from among those in possession of libraries, perhaps recalcitrant monks or cantankerous private owners of Italy, the Greek East, or even more distant lands such as Poland,<sup>34</sup> but after the finding of such works permission had to be obtained to copy, borrow, or as a last resort to buy them from their owners. Only after these often painful preliminaries could the task of preparing the manuscript for the press begin.

Establishment of the original text was the basic problem. In an era when the science of palaeography was in its infancy, this was indeed a slow, difficult process. After the decipherment and transcription of the manuscript — frequently from faulty, mutilated, or otherwise unsatisfactory documents — as well as attempts to solve the numerous philological questions that remained, the text would be set in type. Following these steps, the proofs had to be read by a person not only skilled in the technical aspects of typography but also familiar with the style of the author in question.

Aldus found the solution to the many facets of his task by gathering around him a group of learned men and, in what was soon to become the fashion of the age, forming an academy. Thus in 1500 in conjunction with two friends, the Italian Scipio

<sup>32</sup>See Knös, *Janus Lascaris* 21. Cf. notes 30-31 above.

<sup>33</sup>Statement of Bessarion, cited in his will leaving his library to Venice. See Omont, "Inventaire des manuscrits grecs" 139.

<sup>34</sup>See Nichols I, 437, quoting in trans. from Erasmus' *Adages* of 1526; cf. Didot, *Alde Manuce* 420.

Carteromachus (known in Italian as Forteguerri) and the Cretan John Gregoropoulos of the Greek colony in Venice, Aldus founded his Νεακαδημία (New Academy). Its prime function was to select the Greek authors to be printed and to seek a solution of the various philological and literary problems involved.<sup>35</sup> Although every important Italian city of the Renaissance period would possess one or more academies, that of Aldus alone was dedicated entirely to Greek studies.<sup>36</sup> Its constitution (*Νεακαδημίας Νόμος*) which was drawn up in Greek, provided for the exclusive use of that language at all sessions; in the event of violation of this rule a fine had to be paid to Aldus.<sup>37</sup> With the money collected, periodic banquets were held in imitation of the Platonic symposia.

In order to aid in the exigencies of the publishing process, the Academy was divided into several sections, with a group of proof-readers, including a head reader and a corrector, belonging to each. Though each section was carefully organized, the Academy as a whole operated on a rather informal basis. Membership was apparently not fixed and changes in the roster seem to have been not infrequent.<sup>38</sup> Included were some very famous names, the more important of which may here be listed: Prince Alberto Pio of Carpi, Scipio Carteromachus, Fra Urbano Bolzanio, Battista Eganzio, Girolamo Aleandro (the "true" founder of the teaching of Greek in Paris and before whom, in his capacity of papal nuncio,

<sup>35</sup>From 1494 to 1515 no less than 30 *editiones principes* of Greek authors and works of reference were produced by Aldus (see E. Robertson "Aldus Manutius, the Scholar-Printer," *Bulletin of J. Rylands Library* 23 [1950] 72; 27 ed. pr., according to Sandys, op.cit. II, 100; cf. H. Omont, *Catalogues des livres grecs et latins imprimés par Alde Manuce à Venise, 1498, 1503, 1513* [Paris 1892]). Sandys' statement, often repeated (II 265, n.1), that by Aldus' death in 1515 "all the principal Greek classics had been printed" is not exactly correct, Polybius, e.g., not being printed until later.

<sup>36</sup>J. Sandys, *Harvard Lectures on the Revival of Learning* (Cambridge 1905) 100. Of course, the circle of Bessarion in Rome (when under Nicholas V's protection, 1447-55) had also been devoted to Greek studies, but there Latin translation from the Greek—not publication—was the aim, and unlike the Aldine Academy, exclusive use of the Greek language in meetings was not prescribed.

<sup>37</sup>Greek text of constitution in Didot, *Alde Manuce* 435, who remarks (148) that solecisms were not fined! One wonders if Erasmus, who is generally accepted as a visiting member of the Academy, had to pay many fines. It is extremely doubtful that he spoke Greek with any degree of fluency. See Nichols I, 450.

<sup>38</sup>As is evident from P. de Nolhac, "Les correspondants d'Alde Manuce," *Studi e documenti di storia e diritto* 8 (1887) 255-299, who includes letters to Aldus from former or absent members of the Academy.

Luther would be arraigned at Worms),<sup>39</sup> Pietro Bembo (later secretary to Pope Leo X and Cardinal)<sup>40</sup> and Fra Giocondo — all Italian humanist scholars; Andrea Navagero, Daniele Ranieri, Marino Sanuto (whose famous *Diarii* are a mine of information for the period), and Paolo Canale — Venetian statesmen and nobles;<sup>41</sup> Giovanni da Lucca and Ambrogio Leoni — Italian physicians; and finally a large group of Greeks — Marcus Musurus,<sup>42</sup> Demetrius Ducas (who subsequently went to Spain and helped to produce the Greek versions of Cardinal Ximenes' famous Polyglot Bible), John Gregoropoulos, Arsenios Apostolis, and John Rhosos,<sup>43</sup> all of Crete; Justin Decadyos of Corfu, and the Constantinopolitan Janus Lascaris, who had assumed Bessarion's role as "protector of the Greeks" and at this time held the high office of French ambassador to the republic of Venice.<sup>44</sup> Many celebrated names in Western intellectual as well as political history are to be found here.

Of capital significance is the fact that of a total of what have been estimated as some 36 to 39 more or less permanent members,<sup>45</sup> more than a dozen were Greek-born, refugees or exiles from the wreck of the Byzantine world, and of this latter number about half were from the island of Crete, then still under Venetian domin-

<sup>39</sup>On Carteromachus see Nichols I, 453-54. On Egnazio see Nichols I, 441 and Renaudet, *op.cit.* 84. There is a large bibl. on Aleandro; for his relations with Erasmus (which cooled), see esp. J. Paquier, "Erasme et Aléandre," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'école française de Rome* 15 (1895). Aleandro, upon leaving Italy, obtained his position as a teacher of Greek in Paris on Erasmus' recommendation. See Renaudet, *Préréforme et humanisme à Paris* 501ff.

<sup>40</sup>J. Schück, *Aldus Manutius und seine Zeitgenossen in Italien und Deutschland* (Berlin 1862) 75, and others list Bembo as an Academy member, though there seems to be no mention of him in the sources at the time of Erasmus' visit.

<sup>41</sup>On all of these see Didot 468-70 and 447-48, and Renaudet, *Erasme et l'Italie*, 82.

<sup>42</sup>On him see below.

<sup>43</sup>On all of these see Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique*, I, and documents in vol. 2; also my forthcoming book on Greek learning in Venice.

<sup>44</sup>On Lascaris see esp. Knös, *Janus Lascaris*.

<sup>45</sup>Exact number disputed: Didot, *Alde Manuce* 148, names 39, the largest list; Renouard, *Annales III*, 38, objects, believing probably justifiably that not every associate of Aldus was an "Academician." Schück, *Aldus Manutius* 69-84, tends to agree with Renouard. Yet their lists, including 36 names, are hardly smaller than that of Didot. M. Gilmore, *The World of Humanism* (New York 1952) 190, notes that almost half of the total number were Greek. In general, on all the Greek scholars mentioned in this study see Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique*; C. Boerner, *De doctis hominibus graecis* (Leipzig 1701), C. Sathas, *Νεοελληνική Φιλολογία* (Athens 1868); and on their work as copyists see esp. M. Vogel and V. Gardthausen, *Die griechischen Schreiber des Mittelalters und der Renaissance* (Leipzig, 1909).

ation.<sup>46</sup> Crete too after 1453 had received an influx of refugees from Byzantine territories, a considerable number of whom, owing to the dearth of economic and intellectual opportunities on the island, had subsequently migrated to Venice, there to contribute to the activities of its Greek colony.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to regular membership, the *Neakademia* on occasion would confer a kind of honorary status on distinguished foreign visitors, who were thus enabled to attend its meetings during the course of their stay in Venice and who could not but profit from their experience. Such was the case of Erasmus of Rotterdam.<sup>48</sup>

Before discussing the activities of Erasmus in the Aldine environment, it may be well to give some account of the living and working conditions of the employees and associates of Aldus. Erasmus himself, in his colloquy *Opulentia Sordida (The Wealthy Miser*, as someone has aptly translated it) has left us what is generally accepted as a description of the Aldine establishment.<sup>49</sup> Virtually all the employees, some thirty-three in number,<sup>50</sup> lived in the same household, a building in the quarter of San Paterniano which was the possession of Aldus' father-in-law and later business partner, Andrea d'Asola. In these cramped quarters where Erasmus had to share a room with Girolamo Aleandro and where, moreover, all were accustomed to take their meals together, Erasmus, a chronic complainer, was evidently not exactly satisfied. Erasmus describes the household as miserly; the host, he says, crudely economized by serving only two meals a day, the first at one o'clock and the second on the master's — that is d'Asola's — return, often after ten. The fare was extremely frugal, usually thin soup and bad wine (responsible, claimed Erasmus, for bringing

<sup>46</sup>Most of the Academy compositors were Cretans, the head corrector being John Gregoropoulos (Didot, *Alde Manuce* 151, 440). A remarkable number of Cretans achieved fame in the West as copyists of MSS. See H. Omont, *Fac-similés des Manuscrits grecs des XVe et XVIe siècles* (Paris 1887).

<sup>47</sup>See Veludo, *Sulla colonia greca . . . in Venezia*, and Greek version (1893), *passim*.

<sup>48</sup>Another example is that of the English scholar Linacre, whose Latin trans. of Proclus' *Sphere* Aldus had published in 1499; cf. Schück, *Aldus Manutius* 69, n.1.

<sup>49</sup>Text in *Colloquies of Desiderius Erasmus*, trans. by N. Bailey, 3 (London 1900) 180-195. Also see Mangan, *op.cit.* I, 247. For analysis see esp. P. Smith, "Key to the Colloquies of Erasmus," *Harvard Theological Studies* XIII (1927), who identifies the pseudonyms used by Erasmus.

<sup>50</sup>See Mangan, *op.cit.* I, 248-49, for Erasmus' enumeration.

on his first attack of the stone), with the *pièce de résistance* consisting of "a morsel of stony cheese and seven small lettuce leaves floating in a bowl of rancid vinegar."<sup>51</sup>

Most scholars agree that while this picture of the Aldine household contains certain elements of truth, it is at the same time grossly distorted. Actually the colloquy was written twenty-three years later as a defense against the scurrilous attack on Erasmus of the Ciceronian, Julius Caesar Scaliger, who reproached him with "having escaped from a monastery in Holland in order to take refuge with Aldus, engaging himself as a corrector of proofs and drinking like a triple Geryon, but doing only half the work of one man."<sup>52</sup>

Whatever sentiments Erasmus may have expressed subsequently, there is no evidence of a rift between him and members of the Aldine circle during the period of his stay in Venice. Evidently the only person provoked by the satire was Aldus' old friend Alberto Pio, who much later, in 1535, while an exile in Paris and himself involved in the conflict over Ciceronianism, scornfully accused Erasmus of ingratitude to Aldus and of working for the latter as a mere corrector of proofs rather than as an associate.<sup>53</sup> But in the Aldine workshop the terms "corrector" and "editor" were virtually synonymous. Aldus himself, for example, insisted on reading all final proofs and even such eminent Hellenists as Marcus Musurus — in my view the greatest Greek philologist of the entire Renaissance — and Demetrius Ducas, supervisor of the Aldine *Rhetores Graeci*, on occasion served as correctors. The term therefore had no opprobrious connotation. Nevertheless, in view of the remarks of his detractors, Erasmus always was careful to

<sup>51</sup>On all this see esp. letter of Beatus Rhenanus (Nichols I, 30). Also Erasmus' *Apologia ad xxiv libros Alberti Pii* (trans. in Nichols I, 447). Because of the stone Erasmus requested d'Asola that he be allowed to prepare meals in his chamber. For Erasmus' statement quoted here see trans. of Mangan, *op.cit.* I, 250.

<sup>52</sup>For (disputed) date of Scaliger's work containing this statement and for a clear study of their complex controversy, see esp. V. Hall Jr., "The Life of Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484-1558)", *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, n.s. 40 (1950) 99ff. Cf. Smith, *Erasmus* 311 who dates it 1529. Also Mangan, *op.cit.* I, 256.

<sup>53</sup>On Pio see Semper, *Carpī: Ein Fürstensitz* 21A. Excerpts from polemics of Pio and Erasmus printed *ibid.* 27B-29, and esp. in note 152. Scaliger repeated Pio's charge (Nichols I, 448).

maintain that he corrected only his own work and this after elimination of the obvious errors by another proofreader.<sup>54</sup>

Immediately upon Erasmus' arrival in Venice the work of publishing an enlarged edition of his *Adages* began. As noted, revision of the volume was then far from complete. Indeed, to quote his own words, he had at the time "but the confused and undigested material of future work, and that compiled *only from authors already published.*"<sup>55</sup> The closing phrase may be compared with a revealing statement Erasmus made later as to the unavailability of Greek manuscripts when (in 1500) he published the first edition of the *Adages* in Paris: "I had no supply of Greek codices, without which trying to write about proverbs is nothing else than trying to fly without wings, as Plautus says."<sup>56</sup>

Erasmus found the situation in Venice altogether different. Generous aid came from members of the Aldine circle who supplied him with various manuscripts in their possession, including even texts of unedited authors. Aldus himself provided unpublished codices from his own library, which, Erasmus attests, was supplied better than any other especially in Greek books.<sup>57</sup> In addition Aldus permitted Erasmus access to letters of scholars from all over Europe with whom he was in correspondence regarding manuscript and literary problems.<sup>58</sup> Specific acknowledgement of indebtedness was made by Erasmus in the famous adage "Festina Lente," in which he wrote that "without the precious aid of these men my book would have been much less complete."<sup>59</sup>

Erasmus makes individual mention in the same adage of the Greeks Janus Lascaris and Marcus Musurus, as well as the

<sup>54</sup>For Erasmus' defense see trans. of his *Apologia ad xxiv libros*, in Nichols I, 446-47.

<sup>55</sup>"Idque ex evulgatis dumtaxat autoribus" (from 1526, Froben ed. [entitled *Adagiorum Opus*] of "Festina Lente," Chil. II, cent. 1, prov. 1, p. 340). Trans. in Nichols I, 438.

<sup>56</sup>Remark printed in preface of Froben 1515 ed. of *Adages*; trans. in T. Appelt, *Studies in the Sources and Contents of Erasmus' Adagia* (Dissertation, University of Chicago 1942) 14; and see Allen I, 523.

<sup>57</sup>See Nolhac, *Erasme en Italie* 51, citing "Festina Lente." Also cf. Froben 1526 ed., p. 139.

<sup>58</sup>For the correspondence see Nolhac, "Les Correspondants d'Alde Manuce," *Studi e documenti di storia e diritto* 8 (1887) and 9 (1888), esp. 250ff. and 253.

<sup>59</sup>See Froben ed. (Basle 1526), entitled *Adagiorum Opus*, 339-40. Also trans. of passage by Smith, *Erasmus* 42: "many learned men of their own accord offered me authors not yet published." That these passages appear later in the 1526 ed. but not in the original Aldine makes them even more significant.

Italians Battista Egnazio and "Frater" Urbanus (Urbano Bolzanio).<sup>60</sup> All of them are credited by Erasmus with the loan of rare manuscripts from their private libraries, including a large number of very important Greek works otherwise unprinted or inaccessible to him. Among the Greek manuscripts loaned were the dialogues of Plato (the Greek *editio princeps* edited by Musurus was soon to issue from the Aldine press in 1513); Plutarch's *Lives* and *Moralia* (the latter of which, edited by Ducas, was at that very moment being printed);<sup>61</sup> Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*,<sup>62</sup> Aphthonius;<sup>63</sup> Hermogenes with scholia and the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle (both of which were included in the Aldine *Rethores Graeci* printed in 1508-9);<sup>64</sup> a complete Aristides with annotations;<sup>65</sup> scholia on Hesiod and Theocritus, as well as the even more valuable ones of Eustathius of Thessalonika on Homer;<sup>66</sup> Pausanias;<sup>67</sup> Pindar with (to quote Erasmus' own phrase) "care-

<sup>60</sup>All four are again mentioned by name in Erasmus' later work, *Apologia ad xxiv Libros* (see Nichols I, 447).

<sup>61</sup>See 1526 Froben ed. of Erasmus' *Adages* 340: "Moralia, quae sub finem operis mei copta sunt excudi." Plutarch's *Moralia* was actually issued in 1509. The *Lives* were first printed in 1517 by F. Giunta of Florence. See A. M. Bandini, *De Florentina Juntarum Typographia et Juntarum Typog. Annales*, II (Lucca 1791). The *Lives* were published in 1519 by Aldus (Renouard, *Annales* I, 207).

<sup>62</sup>Unavailability to the West corroborated by C. Bühler, "Aldus Manutius and the Printing of Athenaeus," *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* (Mainz 1955) 104-6. The *ed. princeps*, ed. by Musurus, was published by Aldus in 1514, although there exists a single page of a projected Aldine edition dating from 1499-1500.

<sup>63</sup>On Aphthonius, the 4th century Greek rhetorician, see Didot, *Alde Manuce* 312, and J. Graesse, *Trésor de livres rares et précieux* I (Dresden 1859) 158. His *Progymnasmata* was evidently under press when Erasmus was with Aldus.

<sup>64</sup>The Hermogenes first became known in the West through the Aldine ed., which also contained Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (and included Aristotle's *Poetics*.) Curiously, in his statement analyzed here, Erasmus affirms that Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, loaned to him, included the commentary of Gregory of Nazianzus ("Aristotelis rhetorica cum scholiis Gregorii Nazianseni": ed. cited *supra* n. 59). However, Gregory does not seem to have written such a work: at least I can find no evidence of it. Noljac, *Erasme en Italie* 40, n.4; Renaudet 85; and Appelt, *op.cit.* 146, cite Gregory's scholia but without comment. Smith, *Erasmus* 146, deliberately omits mention of Gregory's work though he is quoting Erasmus' own words.

<sup>65</sup>Unknown to the West before this time, the *ed. princeps* of Aristides was published in 1517 by Giunta at Florence (Graesse, *op.cit.* I, 205). But Aldus published certain of Aristides' orations in his *Rethorum Graecorum Orationes* in 1513 (Didot, 334).

<sup>66</sup>Eustathius' *scholia* were already known to the West through MSS. of Bessarion, but the *scholia* were not published until 1542-50 in Rome, ed. by Mathew Devaris of Corfu, pupil of Janus Lascaris (Graesse, *op.cit.* II, 258; also Sandys, *Hist. Class. Schol.* II, 78).

<sup>67</sup>The *ed. princeps* of Pausanias appeared in 1516, Aldine press (after Aldus' death) and edited by Musurus (Graesse, *op.cit.* V, 177 and cf. Sandys, *Hist. of Class. Schol.* II, 104). But the work was probably known to the West before this time.

fully made annotations;”<sup>68</sup> proverb collections ascribed to Plutarch<sup>69</sup> and also the sayings compiled by Michael Apostolis (the fifteenth century Byzantine whose son, Arsenios, at one time was a member of the Aldine group)<sup>70</sup> — and, as Erasmus concludes in the same adage, “alia minuta.”<sup>71</sup>

Even a cursory glance at this list reveals that it comprises some of the most celebrated and influential works of Greek antiquity in the fields of rhetoric, philosophy, ethics, geography, and epic and lyric poetry. And the large majority of these — with the notable exception of the writings of Plato, Aristotle, and Plutarch — were virtually unknown to the West before their subsequent publication by the Aldine Press. Through Erasmus’ own words, moreover, there is here revealed direct exchange between representatives of not two but three cultural traditions — Byzantine, Italian, and, if we may use the term, Northern European — a fact of vital importance for the later development of Western intellectual thought. Only in Venice, owing to the peculiar circumstances of its connections with the East, could Erasmus in this period have been provided with such a rich variety of important and unexploited Greek authors.<sup>72</sup>

For this magnificent aid Erasmus more than once expressed gratitude. In one place he records that he was assisted by certain ones “whom I knew neither personally nor by name.” Notable is the contrast he draws, again in “Festina Lente,” between the

<sup>68</sup>The *ed. princeps* of Pindar was issued by Aldus in 1513. Callierges’ famous Pindar with scholia appeared in Rome in 1515. The author of Erasmus’ “carefully made annotations” is not specified, though he may well have been Musurus.

<sup>69</sup>Some modern scholars cite the author as “a certain Plutarch,” but since the famous Plutarch of Boeotia did make such a collection, this refers probably to him. The collection is referred to usually as that of Pseudo-Plutarch.

<sup>70</sup>Michael’s collection in its entirety was not published until 1832. His son and literary heir Arsenios had been in Venice for several years before 1500 because his name appears on two Aldine publications of 1494-95 and 1496 and it seems that in 1498-9 he quarreled with Aldus. Cf. Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique* II, 337. According to documents recently found by M. Manousakas (“Ἀρχιερέis Μεθώνης . . . ,” *Πελοποννησιακά* 3 [1959] 115-116, 144) Arsenios was in Venice and knew Erasmus during the latter’s stay there.

<sup>71</sup>All the above MSS., as noted, are listed in the slightly enlarged version of the adage, “Festina Lente,” published in the 1526 ed. *Adagiorum Opus* p. 340, of Froben.

<sup>72</sup>Pope Nicholas V, already in the mid-fifteenth century, had in Rome collected 350 Greek MSS., but Bessarion’s library, now deposited in Venice, included ca. 500 MSS. (see Omont’s article, *supra* n. 28). Indeed in Venice Erasmus seems to have used not so much Bessarion’s library as private collections like those of Janus Lascaris, Musurus, and Aldus, as Erasmus himself indicates (see text above).

liberality of the Aldine scholars who strove to aid him, "an utter stranger," and what he terms the "selfishness" of the Northern savants.<sup>73</sup>

Incorporation of the mass of new material so increased the scope of the *Adages* that this Aldine edition of 1508, a folio volume of over 500 pages containing more than 3,000 adages, constituted in reality a new work.

While Erasmus set himself to write, Aldus began to print with that "deliberate rapidity" which Erasmus has helped to make famous in "Festina Lente," the adage in which he describes the Aldine printer's mark of an anchor entwined with a dolphin, and praises Aldus' professional ideals of tempering swiftness with deliberateness.

It was the first time that Erasmus had essayed the role of writing at the same time that printing was in progress. What rendered his task even more difficult was the skill of the Aldine workmen, who printed with a rapidity extraordinary for the time. The first proof, we are told, was corrected by an employee named Serafino. Erasmus then occupied himself with additions and what today would be termed corrections of the author. The final copy was always corrected by Aldus himself. Aldus' meticulousness evoked a query from Erasmus as to why he took such pains, to which the reply was "*studeo*."<sup>74</sup> The picture of the two scholars working together in a room filled with the noise of the press has remained classic in the annals of printing.

Publication of the *Adages* was completed by September (1508) after nine months of uninterrupted labor. The volume, which occupies a capital place in the development of humanistic learning, is essentially a vast congeries of proverbs, maxims, and pithy sayings gleaned from Greek and Latin authors. The idea of making such a collection was not new, for works of more or less similar type had already been compiled in Byzantium, such as that of the so-called Suidas (more correctly Suda) of the 10th century,<sup>75</sup> and

<sup>73</sup>See 1526 Froben ed. of *Adages* 340; also Nichols I, 438-39.

<sup>74</sup>See Erasmus' *Apologia ad xxiv libros Alberti Pii* (in Nichols I, 446).

<sup>75</sup>Suidas is actually the name of a lexicon (correctly, Σούδα), not an author. Evidently Eustathius of Thessalonica (12th century) was the first to use the term as that of an author. See F. Dölger, "Der Titel des sogenannten Suidaslexikons," *Sitzungsber. der Bayer. Akad. d. Wiss., Phil.-hist. Kl.* (Munich 1936) 6.

of Michael Apostolis of the late fifteenth. But the work of Erasmus is among the very first of its kind in the West.<sup>76</sup>

What made his volume particularly distinctive was not only the richness and variety of the proverbs included but the fact that a predominant number were accompanied by instructive commentaries, the content of which, Erasmus admits, was in great part based on Greek materials given to him and analyzed in conjunction with members of the Aldine circle.<sup>77</sup> Such a storehouse of ancient sayings with explanation would be invaluable to those desirous of improving their knowledge of the classics and of even more practical use to the educated man, for whom elegance of style could be enhanced by graceful allusion to classical authors. The *Adages* in fact were to enjoy enormous popularity, especially in the North, and were utilized for over a century not only as a Latin and Greek dictionary and grammar, but also as a commonplace book, journal, and history of travel all in one.<sup>78</sup> Not without justification has the book been termed the most popular work of the entire period.

In order better to explain the nature of the Aldine publication and especially the magnitude of the Greek material newly incorporated, two selections from the work, by the persons responsible for its production, are here presented in English translation:<sup>79</sup> first, the preface of Aldus in which he praises Erasmus to the reader,

<sup>76</sup>According to Mangan, *op.cit.* I, 126, several other Westerners, including Polydore Virgil, anticipated Erasmus in this field, though Erasmus' work is of course much larger and enriched with comments. Typical of Erasmus, he failed to mention his indebtedness to Polydore, a fact which incensed the latter.

<sup>77</sup>See e.g., Erasmus' adage, "Rana Gyrina Sapientior," from Plato's *Theatetus*, as printed in *Opera Omnia* (Leyden 1703) (first appearing in ed. of 1520 so far as I am aware), where Erasmus writes: "That I was able to interpret this passage more accurately was due to Girolamo Aleandro, a man . . . bound to me by an old friendship." Since Erasmus and Aleandro fell out after Erasmus left Venice, this should refer to their common residence in that city. This is a specific example of the kind of discussion that constantly went on in the Aldine group.

<sup>78</sup>See Drummond, *Erasmus* 27. Cf. Appelt, *op.cit.* 40, who regards this statement as slightly exaggerated as, in his view, the *Adages* lacked organization. However, though the earlier editions have no index (only a table of contents), the Aldine (1508) ed. (which Appelt does not use) contains not only an alphabetical index but one carefully arranged by subject, a fact of much help to readers.

<sup>79</sup>Complete title of Aldine ed. is *Adagiorum Chiliades tres, ac centuriae fere totidem. Date of publication is given as September, 1508, "Venetiis in aedibus Aldi."* My microfilm was obtained from the Bodleian Library of Oxford University. I have also consulted a copy of the original Aldine ed. in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence, Italy.

and second, a similar passage by Erasmus from his adage "Festina Lente," wherein, as if in response to Aldus' preface, he extols the work of his printer and his contribution to letters.<sup>80</sup>

### *Aldus to Scholars*

*I wish nothing more, dear readers, than to be of service to you. On this account, therefore, when there had come into my hands this erudite work of Erasmus of Rotterdam, that most learned of men in the world — (this work containing adages of such variety and richness of content is worthy of being compared with the works of antiquity itself) — I interrupted the publication of certain ancient authors which I had been preparing in order that we might print this instead, believing that it would prove useful to you, both because of the great number of adages which the author has assiduously collected with a maximum of effort and solicitude from a large group of writers, Latin as well as Greek, and also because during the course of the work many passages in the writings of either language were judiciously emended by him or eruditely explained.*

The work reveals how much one may profit from proverbs such as these — just think, in fact, how they can be accommodated to different uses. In this work about ten thousand verses from Homer, Euripides, and other Greek writers have been faithfully and scholarly translated into Latin utilizing the same meter as the Greek, in addition to numerous passages from Plato, Demosthenes, and other authors.

But whether I speak the truth, you shall judge from your own experience. "Behold Rhodes, behold therefore where you must jump."<sup>81</sup> For, as is often said, "He plays the flute best who plays himself."<sup>82</sup>

These two proverbs are evidently taken from the collection of the Cretan Michael Apostolis, a copy of which was presented to Erasmus by his room mate Aleandro, who in turn, probably

<sup>80</sup>Except for a part of Aldus' preface, this is, to my knowledge, the first time the following two selections appear in English translation (the translations are my own). The Latin original of the first selection is printed in Renouard, *Annales I*, 125.

<sup>81</sup>For this proverb, for which Aldus cites no provenience, see L. Leutsch's ed. of *Paroemiographi Graeci 2* (Göttingen 1951) 149. Leutsch cites Gregory of Cyprus (13th century), who evidently took it from Aesop, fable 30 (see Leutsch 101, n. 86).

<sup>82</sup>See Leutsch, 149. Proverb included in Michael Apostolis' collection and in the earlier ones of (pseudo) Diogenianus and Macarius of Philadelphia.

secured it from an Aldine colleague, Michael's son Arsenios Apostolis.<sup>83</sup>

[Erasmus' *Encomium on Aldus*]<sup>84</sup>

*Indeed I do not believe that this mark [Aldus' printer's mark of the anchor and the dolphin] was even more illustrious at that time when, engraved on the imperial nomisma [the Byzantine coin] it was carried about to be effaced by the handling of merchants, than it is now, when everywhere in the world, in fact even beyond the limits of the Christian Empire, it is spread abroad along with books of both languages to be recognized, held in esteem, and exalted by all who devote themselves to the cult of liberal studies: particularly by those who, surfeited with that debased, barbarous, and dull learning,<sup>85</sup> aspire to true and ancient erudition, for the restoration of which this man, as if born for the task, seems made, indeed coined so to speak, by the fates themselves. With such ardent devotion does he aspire to this one end, with such indefatigable zeal does he strive, that he has hitherto not shied away from any task whatever in order that the material of literature may be restored for scholars, [and rendered] unimpaired, genuine, and pure . . . By God, it is a Herculean task and one worthy of a princely mind to restore to the world something divine which has almost completely foundered, to search for what is hidden, to bring to light what has been concealed, to imbue with life what has been extinguished, to reconstruct passages that have been mutilated, and to emend others distorted in countless ways through the fault especially of irresponsible printers, to whom the small profit of even one gold coin is of greater value than all of literature . . .*

*If one seeks to evaluate the accomplishments of princes, among these the greatest glory must be ascribed to Ptolemy [Philadelphus]. But his library was enclosed within the con-*

<sup>83</sup>On Aleandro's presentation of the work to Erasmus see the latter's words in his "Festina Lente," Froben ed., 1526, p. 340: "Proverbiorum collectio . . . titulo Apostoli, cuius libri nobis copiam fecit Hieronymus Aleander." On Arsenios' contribution see *supra*, n. 70.

<sup>84</sup>This selection, from adage "Festina Lente", first appears in the Aldine *Adages*, though Smith, *Erasmus* 41-42, 44, states the adage was not printed until 1526. The single passage concerning aid rendered Erasmus by the Aldine circle is lacking from the 1508 ed. but the adage proper is certainly included.

<sup>85</sup>A reference to medieval scholastic learning.

*straining walls of a building, while that of Aldus is delimited only by the ends of the world itself.*

A more precise method of measuring the extent of the influence of the Aldine group on Erasmus would be to establish the number of Greek passages added to the Aldine version as compared with those included in the edition produced in Paris immediately before his Venetian residence.<sup>86</sup> Though the *Adages* had already undergone various reprintings,<sup>87</sup> only this 1507 Paris edition, done by Jean Petit and Josse Badius, was actually a revision. And in this Paris edition, which bears the title *Adagiorum Collectanea*, there is an increase of merely 23 adages over the original edition, with only 332 paragraphs containing Greek.<sup>88</sup> In the vastly enlarged Aldine edition, however, of which the new title *Chiliades Adagiorum Tres* is extremely revealing, more than four-fifths of the total proverbs are now entirely new or substantially altered in form. And 2,734, or no less than 84 per cent of the total, now contain Greek passages of two to six lines or more in length, along with greatly extended Latin elaborations of previous annotational material.<sup>89</sup>

Although in subsequent editions the total number of proverbs

<sup>86</sup>Such a comparison has not hitherto been attempted.

<sup>87</sup>On the various editions see F. Van der Haeghen, R. Van der Berghe, and Th. J. Arnold, *Bibliotheca Erasmiana, Bibliographie des œuvres d'Erasmus: Adagia* (Gand 1897). Though the original Paris ed., entitled *Adagiorum Collectanea*, was far slimmer than the Aldine *Chiliades*, publishers continued to print it. The *Collectanea* went through four editions (1500, 1507, 1509, and one undated) and thirty-one reprints. The *Chiliades* was published in fifteen editions (nine during Erasmus' lifetime) and thirty-six reprints.

<sup>88</sup>This Petit-Badius ed. (1507) is generally cited as containing 838 adages. But three adages are misnumbered (e.g., two sometimes are given the same number); hence there are actually 841. Incidentally, in the Aldine ed. I have also noted ten mis-numbered adages.

<sup>89</sup>This percentage is based on a careful comparison of the two editions made by my assistant Catherine Byrly, who has determined that only slightly over half (463 adages) of the 1507 edition adages were incorporated into the Aldine publication. Of these 463, passages in Greek were now first introduced into 129 adages of the Aldine edition, while in the case of 103 adages the amount of Greek was increased. The number of adages without Greek passages remained relatively static—509 adages in 1507 and 537 in 1508. The conclusion to be drawn is that the overall increase in size of the Aldine ed. is due mainly to the addition of proverbs derived from Greek sources, which would mean the MSS. given him by members of the Aldine circle. T. Appelt, *Studies in the Contents and Sources of Erasmus' Adagia with Particular Reference to the First Edition, 1500, and the Edition of 1526* (Chicago 1942) hardly considers the Aldine 1508 ed. nor the problem of Erasmus' debt to the Aldine circle.

in the *Adages* was ultimately to exceed 4,000,<sup>90</sup> it is evident that the greatest increase in the size of the volume occurred in the interval between the two editions in question, that is, between the 1507 Paris edition and the Aldine of 1508. Aside from the contribution of Bombasio in Bologna — which seems to have been small and regarding which Erasmus hardly makes mention<sup>91</sup> — it seems clear that by far the largest share of credit for this tremendous increase in content, particularly in connection with Greek authors, should be ascribed to members of the Aldine circle, especially the Byzantine scholars, who lent rare manuscripts to Erasmus and discussed with him the meaning and significance of the material therein.

Erasmus' Venetian residence would have been profitable if marked only by publication of this enriched edition of the *Adages*. But there were other ways in which he benefited from the Aldine group. We may, for example, consider the problem of the so-called "Erasmian" pronunciation of ancient Greek, current today and which is commonly held to be the work of Erasmus.<sup>92</sup> Closer scrutiny, however, reveals that this belief has little basis in fact and that the inspiration for the theory came at least in part from the Aldine circle.

Actually three other Western scholars preceded Erasmus in this field, Antonio de Lebrija, of Salamanca University in Spain, the Italian Girolamo Aleandro, and Aldus himself.<sup>93</sup> Aside from

<sup>90</sup>In last ed. published by Erasmus (Froben 1536).

<sup>91</sup>Appelt, *op.cit.* 145, shows that in the 1526 ed. Erasmus mentions Bombasio only twice for suggesting proverbs, while, for example, citing "Suidas" 325 times. I was able to discover only one mention of Bombasio in the entire Aldine 1508 ed. (p. 65r).

<sup>92</sup>See Erasmus' treatise, *De recta Latini Graecique sermonis pronuntiatione . . .* (1528). On the Erasmian pronunciation see esp. W. Drerup, *Die Schulaussprache des Griechischen von der Renaissance bis zur Gegenwart*, 1 (Paderborn 1930); E. Egger, *Hellénisme en France* 1 (Paris 1869) 451-70; and H. Pernot and D. Hesseling, "Erasme et les origines de la prononciation érasmienne," *Revue des études grecques* 22 (1919) 278-301.

<sup>93</sup>Lebrija stayed for ten years in Italy, where he studied Greek at Bologna under Andronicos Callistos and perhaps Constantine Lascaris and Demetrios Chalcondyles (see Drerup, *op.cit.* I, 31; Bywater, *The Erasmian Pronunciation of Greek and its Precursors* [London 1908]; but cf. G. Cammelli, "Andronico Callisto," *Rinascita* 23-24 [1942], who does not mention Lebrija). Lebrija wrote on Greek pronunciation as early as 1503 (Bywater, 20), his work later being appended to the Alcalà ed. of *Introductiones Latinae*. On Lebrija see also P. Lemus y Rubio, "El Maestro Elio Antonio de Librixa 1441?-1522," *Revue Hispanique* 22 (1910) 459-508, and 29 (1917) 13-120, esp. 91, which lists under A. 1563 a work of Lebrija entitled *De litteris Graecis* (Saragossa 1563). According to Bywater, *op.cit.* 11, Aleandro had produced a short statement on Greek pronunciation in 1512.—With respect to Greek pronunciation Drerup, *op.cit.* I, 39, also mentions a Dutch contemporary of Erasmus named Ceratinus.

Lebrija, who was not an Aldine but who seems to have studied Greek in Italy with at least one Byzantine scholar, Aleandro was evidently only following in the footsteps of his employer and associate Aldus.<sup>94</sup> A small tract of Aldus on this very problem, *De literis graecis, ac diphthongis et quemadmodum ad nos veniant . . .*<sup>95</sup> was under press at the time of Erasmus' arrival at the Aldine establishment and during the initial stages of publication of his *Adages*. Granted the freedom permitted the eternally inquisitive Erasmus to browse in Aldus' library, even to the point of examining his personal correspondence, Erasmus could not have failed to read a tract published for anyone to see. But this raises an even more basic question: if we accept the inspiration of Aldus and what seems the anterior but more obscure influence of Lebrija on Erasmus' ideas of the proper Greek pronunciation, to whom should be attributed the original suggestion for such a reform? There is reason to believe that initial responsibility should rest with the Greek refugee-scholars themselves,<sup>96</sup> who were the most influential instruments for reviving the study of Greek in the West. With ancient Greek a quantitative, and Byzantine (as well as modern) Greek an accentual (or isochronal) language, the Byzantines must have suspected even before this period — and there is evidence to support this — that there existed certain differences between their own pronunciation and that of their ancient forebears, especially with respect to metrics in poetry.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>94</sup>Bywater, *op.cit.* 12-13, 21, who also affirms that Lebrija owed nothing to his contemporaries. (Lebrija himself remarked that he stood alone with regard to Greek pronunciation. Cf. *supra* n. 93.) Drerup, *op.cit.* 37, states that Lebrija first attempted to systematize a new method of pronunciation and dared to criticize the Byzantine pronunciation but that for Aldus and Aleandro the ideas remained theoretical.

<sup>95</sup>See Renouard, *Annales* I, 123; Bywater, *op.cit.* 13, says this *fragmentum* of Aldus is lost.

<sup>96</sup>Pernot-Hesseling, "Erasme et . . . la prononciation érasmienne," 299-300, and Drerup, *op.cit.* 37, believe that the Greek exiles first suggested changes in pronunciation or at least had views in agreement with, or later adopted by, Aldus and Aleandro. Bywater, *op.cit.* 11, observes that the protest of Aldus and Aleandro against current Greek was "without a sign of apprehension that the new view might alienate their Greek friends or be resented by them as the suggestion of barbarians". Aleandro in his own treatise wrote that "the Greeks of our day are no more happy in their pronunciation than the Latins in theirs" (*ibid.*). In Bywater's view Aleandro must have been repeating what others, especially Musurus, told him. Drerup, *op.cit.* 62 and Knös, *Janus Lascaris* 160, n. 2, also count Lascaris among promoters of a new pronunciation (cf. Pernot-Hesseling 301).

<sup>97</sup>We know for example that Demetrios Triklinios and other 14th century Byzantine scholars must have known about quantity since they emended ancient texts correctly—to this extent at least.

In reply to the obvious question as to why these Byzantines never attempted to implement their own ideas, the answer is that it would have militated against their national pride to try to alter a pronunciation traditional for centuries. One must remember that for a sensitive, subject people, recently conquered by the Turks, almost the sole vestige of ethnic identity, apart from the Orthodox faith, was heritage of the Greek language. Consequently any attempt to tamper with the customary pronunciation, however theoretical, would have met with immediate opposition. As for Erasmus, though he must thus be stripped of the credit for originally conceiving the idea of a reformed or, more accurately, "restored" pronunciation, to him must go the credit of systematizing the theories already suggested by others into a full program of Greek pronunciation. In other words, it was his treatise which later served as the basis for a successful propagation of the new pronunciation.<sup>98</sup>

Erasmus relates that after publication of the *Adages*, he was persuaded by Aldus to remain a few weeks longer in Venice. During this period he discussed problems of rhetoric with Aldus, emended certain confused verses in manuscripts of Plautus, edited texts of Terence and Seneca and, with Aleandro, corrected the proofs of Plutarch's *Moralia*, which was then under publication.<sup>99</sup>

At the end of October or beginning of November Erasmus departed for Padua, some twenty miles distant from Venice, in order to accept a position as preceptor to the son of the king of Scotland. But as Nolhac has justly affirmed, "Padoue, c'est encore Venise." Hence Erasmus probably maintained close contact with the Aldine group while the press was issuing its impressive edition of the *Rhetores Graeci*.<sup>100</sup>

In Padua, Erasmus spent long hours with the most remarkable

<sup>98</sup>See Drerup, *op.cit.* 47 and Bywater, *op.cit.* 7. On the reception of the Erasmian pronunciation in Western Europe see G. Anagnostopoulos, Έλληνική Εγκυκλοπαίδεια vol. 11, 499 (with bibl.) and Sandys, *Hist. of Class. Schol.* II, 130. An outspoken opponent of the Erasmian pronunciation and supporter of the Byzantine was Reuchlin in Germany, after whom the modern Greek (Byzantine) pronunciation is today often called Reuchlinian.

<sup>99</sup>See Erasmus' *Apologia ad xxiv libros* (in Nichols I, 445). Also Didot, *Alde Manuce* 317 and 414, n. 2. Cf. statement of Rhenanus in Mangan, *op.cit.* I, 261.

<sup>100</sup>See Allen I, 447 and Renaudet, *op.cit.* 87. Also Nolhac, *Erasme en Italie* 53; and Renouard, *Annales* I, 128.

of the Greek emigré scholars, the Cretan Marcus Musurus,<sup>101</sup> then professor of Greek at the city's renowned university and who was what we would call a "commuting" member of the Aldine Academy. Besides editing for Aldus first editions of Hesychius, Aristophanes, Euripides, and many others, it was Musurus who later supervised the Greek *editio princeps* of the complete Plato. For Musurus' scholarship Erasmus expressed only the highest praise, terming him "marvelously skilled in the Latin language, an accomplishment attained by scarcely any (other) Greek except Theodore Gaza and Janus Lascaris . . ."<sup>102</sup> Erasmus was also favorably impressed by Musurus' character, a judgement all too rarely expressed by Westerners on the Greek refugees, who, despite the warm reception at first accorded them, found that as the Westerners began to acquire greater mastery of Greek they tended to have less and less use for their teachers. Through association with Musurus, it would seem very plausible that Erasmus increased his knowledge of Greek during his Paduan stay, even by attendance at Musurus' lectures which were then attracting students from all parts of Europe. Not without reason did Erasmus later, from his vantage point in the North, look upon Padua as "the richest and most famous center of exchange for the best disciplines."<sup>103</sup>

Erasmus had come to enjoy Padua thoroughly. He was deeply vexed when it became apparent that the danger threatening Venetia as a result of the formation of the League of Cambrai would force his departure. As he wrote to his "amicissimus" Aldus, "A curse on these wars which prevent our enjoying a part of Italy which pleases me more and more every day."<sup>104</sup>

<sup>101</sup>On the life of Musurus there is only one work of merit (though inadequate in certain respects), R. Menge, *De Marci Musuri Cretensis vita studiis ingenio narratio*, in *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon*, ed. M. Schmidt, V (Jena 1868). Brief sketches also exist in Legrand, Boerner, etc.

<sup>102</sup>Nichols I, 449. Cf. my article, "A Byzantine Looks at the Renaissance: The Attitude of Michael Apostolis toward the Rise of Italy to Cultural Eminence," *Greek and Byzantine Studies* 1 (1958) 158.

<sup>103</sup>Quoted in Nolhac, *Erasme en Italie* 57, n. 3. On the popularity of Musurus' lectures we may cite, e.g., Erasmus' letter to Gaverus (trans. in Nichols I, 449-50) for mention of a 70-year-old Latin professor at Padua who never missed attending despite the coldest of weather and the early hour at which they were held.

<sup>104</sup>Allen 449, no. 213 and Nichols I, 451.

Erasmus left Padua in December. Although he was never to return to Venice, he forgot neither Aldus' family nor the Aldine circle. Evidence of a continuing friendship between Erasmus and members of the group is provided both by the letters subsequently exchanged<sup>105</sup> and by the warm welcome later extended by old members of the Academy to the German humanist Ulrich von Hutten,<sup>106</sup> on the occasion of his visit to Venice bearing letters of recommendation from Erasmus.

In later years when Erasmus became involved in disputes with the Ciceronian purists such as Scaliger and Dolet and especially Aldus' old Maecenas Alberto Pio,<sup>107</sup> he responded to their attacks with certain exaggerated statements minimizing the extent of his scholarly acquisitions in Venice and particularly his indebtedness to Aldus. Thus in one polemic Erasmus wrote that Aldus would be quite amused to hear that he (Erasmus) had learned Greek and Latin from him — to which Erasmus added the categorical statement, "For myself, I am not indebted to Italy for any letters that I may have . . ."<sup>108</sup> Elsewhere he expressly denied acquisition of any languages in Italy, his specious explanation for which was that in Italy he lacked the leisure to learn.<sup>109</sup> But it would be remarkable indeed if the beneficent influences which made the Queen City of the Adriatic the intellectual center of all Europe did not contribute considerably to the formation of Erasmus' intellectual constitution. In the light of our evidence, therefore, his remarks may be dismissed as the exaggerated protests of a hypersensitive person who felt that his ability as a selfmade scholar must at all costs be defended.

<sup>105</sup>See Nolhac, *Erasme en Italie*, for four letters of Erasmus written in 1523 to Aldus' family.

<sup>106</sup>On relations of Erasmus and Hutten see W. Kaegi, "Hutten und Erasmus," *Historische Vierteljahrsschrift* 22 (1924-25) 200-278 and 461-504; Nolhac, *Erasme en Italie* 43.

<sup>107</sup>On this conflict see bibl. in notes 52-53 above. Also M. Chassaigne, *Etienne Dolet* (Paris 1930) 93ff.; O. Galtier, *Etienne Dolet* (Paris n.d.) 137-146; and the old work of R. Christie, *Etienne Dolet* (London 1899) 203-11, 224.

<sup>108</sup>See *Apologia ad xxiv libros* (trans. in Nichols I, 446-447). Rhenanus says that Erasmus brought to Italy more dignified erudition than most take from it (Mangan, *op.cit.* I, 259), but of course Rhenanus was a partisan and pupil of Erasmus.

<sup>109</sup>Nichols I, 448; and Mangan, *op.cit.* I, 259, for Erasmus' argument to Pio: "Where was the leisure for learning Greek and Latin? We were so busy that we had hardly time, as they say, to scratch our ears." But recall Aldus' answer to Erasmus' query as to why he took such pains: "studeo". See above text and note 74.

In summary, to substantiate the view that Erasmus' classical education was broadened during his nine months in Venice and Padua, one need only point to the *milieu* in which he then moved. Here for the first time he had the opportunity to enjoy the intimacy of a large group of accomplished Greeks who, despite the increasingly able scholarship of the Italians, were still the final authority for Greek in the West; he could participate in the learned discussions of the exclusive Aldine Academy; he had access to the valuable libraries of Aldus and his associates, containing a wealth of Greek manuscripts, many yet unprinted and hence unknown to large sections of the West; and he had undoubtedly heard Aldus and perhaps Aleandro energetically, though amicably, criticizing the Greek pronunciation of their Byzantine confrères. More concretely, through publication of the Aldine *Adages* and the wide circulation of this work throughout Europe, Erasmus achieved recognition as the foremost scholar of the Western world.<sup>110</sup>

When one considers that Erasmus on his return to the North took with him the knowledge he had acquired in Venice, and that the extent of his influence was soon to become unrivaled in European letters, the implications for the diffusion of Greek learning become immediately apparent. It must be emphasized, however, that this Venetian episode reflecting the influence of the Aldine Academy on Erasmus is only a single example, albeit a climactic one, of the traditional medieval function of Venice as intermediary between Byzantium and the Latin West. Constant emphasis on Venice's economic and political activities has served to obscure her purely intellectual achievements. But it is hoped that the analysis presented here may lead to greater appreciation of the Venetian role in the long process of transmitting to the West a language and literature which, in the last analysis, occupied the most significant place in expanding the intellectual horizon of the late medieval and Renaissance world.<sup>111</sup>

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
May 1960

<sup>110</sup>See Renaudet, *op.cit.* 83 and Tilley, *Dawn of the French Renaissance* 287.

<sup>111</sup>Cf. M. Gilmore, *The World of Humanism* (New York 1952) 190. For a more detailed treatment of the Venetian role in the transmission of Greek learning see my forthcoming book, to be published by the Harvard University Press.

# The Genesis of an Oral Heroic Poem

*James A. Notopoulos*

IN THE *Odyssey* Telemachus reminds his mother, "Men praise that song most which comes newest to their ears,"<sup>1</sup> and Homer has the bard Demodocus, in the presence of a veteran of the Trojan war, sing the quarrel of Odysseus and Achilles and the Trojan horse. Thus the oral poet is as much concerned with the *klea andrōn* of contemporary heroes as with battles long ago. Some light can be thrown on such poetry by modern instances in which we can observe at first hand the birth of a heroic poem, such as I recorded in Crete in 1953. By good fortune I arrived there when there was a ferment of oral heroic poems on World War II.

Here in the mountain villages of Sfakia there was still surviving a heroic oral society Homeric in its code of honor. There was deeply ingrained in these old *Kapetanios* as a result of generations of struggle with the Turks the heroic attitude necessary for their survival and for the creation of heroic songs. In the coffee houses and tavernas of these villages there came to greet me men whose families first appear in the catalogue of warriors in that Cretan *Iliad*, the *Song of Daskaloyiannes*, a long narrative poem composed by an illiterate bard in 1786.<sup>2</sup> Many were surprisingly tall warriors, dressed in picturesque baggy trousers, wearing long boots reaching close to the knee, their white locks zoned by a variously worn black kerchief fringed with tassels. Many of them were in their nineties, still blessed with copious memories manifested in the steady flow of traditional songs that they sang around the *tavla* with the raucous verve of rugged individualists.

<sup>1</sup>*Od.* 1. 351.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. J. A. Notopoulos, "Homer and Cretan Heroic Poetry: A Study in Comparative Oral Poetry," *AJA* 73 (1952) 225-250; for a selection of Cretan heroic oral poems, with a historical introduction, text, translation, commentary and musical scoring see my album, *Modern Greek Heroic Oral Poetry* (Folkways Records F.E. 4468, New York 1959).

These heroic poems are part of a long tradition of oral poetry that goes back to the ninth-century Byzantine hero, Digenes Akritas, who remains their ideal.<sup>3</sup> Their favorite ballad is "Digenes is a-dying,"<sup>4</sup> in which the hero becomes a superhuman titan who strides from cliff to cliff and hurls huge boulders, still referred to in various parts of Crete as "Digenes' boulders;" he surpasses deer and mountain goats in speed. Even Charos, the Lord's picturesque knight of Death who wrestles with warriors for their souls, dares not wrestle with Digenes (so also in versions of the other Greek islands) but wounds him in a stealthy ambush. They also sang long narrative tales about the island's many revolts, one of which is memorably described in Niko Kazantzakis' novel, *Freedom or Death*. They are veterans of the last of these revolts, that of Therison led by Venizelos. They love arms, treasuring those sacred relics which they pass from father to son in Homeric fashion. Their sons had found in the German airborne invasion of Crete in 1941<sup>5</sup> an opportunity to be greater than their fathers, or at least their equal. They are by nature proud, individualistic egoists, embroiled often in Achillean quarrels perpetuating long family feuds or arising from sheep-stealing, which is a favorite pastime and keeps them in fighting trim. Many of them abducted their brides, who take special pride in this Sabine marriage. War and brave deeds are still a main topic of conversation. The desire for fame reached such proportions that one of my bards told of an occasion when a guerrilla offered him a wagon full of wine-barrels if he would compose a heroic poem on his deeds.

The bard, called *rimadoros*, occupies a position of honor. Such was old Polychronakis, 83 years of age, a Homeric bard who under a shady tree in his village narrated poems about old revolts and old heroes, about his old fellow-warrior Venizelos, who rose to be Greece's great prime minister, and a long poem on World War II. Other bards sang about the German airborne invasion, the burning of villages, the cruel reprisal execution of villagers who faced the

<sup>3</sup>N. G. Polites, "O Thanatos tou Digenē." *Laographia* I (1910) 169-275; S. P. Kyriakides, *O Digenēs Akritas* (Athens 1926); H. Grégoire, *O Digenēs Akritas* (New York 1942); P. P. Kalonaros, *Basileios Digenēs Akritas*, 2 vols. (Athens 1941-42); D. A. Petropoulos, *Ellēnika Dēmotika Tragoudia* (Athens 1958) 3-65.

<sup>4</sup>For text see N. G. Polites, *Eklogai apo ta Tragoudia tou Ellēnikou Laou* (Athens 1932) 104-105.

<sup>5</sup>D. M. Gavin, *Crete: Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War* (London 1953).

firing squad with traditional Cretan gallantry. Then as a vengeful sequel there was the "Song of Hans, the Gestapo Man," whom the Cretan guerrillas (*andartes*), avenging friends or relatives, tracked to a ravine and sent to Hades with automatics blazing like the nimble Cretan pidikto dance.

I shall select one of these bards, Andreas Kafkalas, age 39, from Sfakia. Though not my best bard, he is noteworthy for his facility in spontaneous improvisation, a subject about which scholars need to know more. He sang, for recording, older tales of the island and a long poem on his war experiences, from which he emerged badly wounded. He sang his version in the morning; when he sang it again in the afternoon, as anticipated it was not identically the same — a phenomenon common in oral literature. When he had finished the second version I commented that in the part which dealt with the German invasion and occupation of Crete he had said nothing about General Kreipe. A moment's hesitation on his part revealed that this famous episode was not originally a part of his poem. Asked if he could improvise a poem on this episode, he replied that he could, and proceeded to "glue" to his previous poem an episode which he had not previously sung. He was not so sure of himself in this new song, as the faulty versification of some lines shows.

Before we proceed to analyze this freshly improvised heroic poem, let us turn to history and General Kreipe. The abduction on April 27, 1944, of General Karl Kreipe, commander of the German forces in the island, by Cretan guerrillas led by two British officers ranks as one of the prize stories of World War II. The plan was conceived by Major Leigh Fermor and Captain Stanley Moss, British officers from Cairo, dropped on Crete by parachute. The abduction was carried out mainly for its psychological effect on the enemy, to show the Germans that their most exalted commander could not rest secure even amid his own forces. The deed was done with the aid of Cretan guerrillas who were to the epic manner born. There were many such bands composed of Cretans, Britons, New Zealanders and Australians, some of whom had been left behind when the British forces withdrew from the beach of Sfakia in May, 1941. These bands lived in the caves of Psilorites (Mt. Ida) or the mountain villages of western Crete. Their life

was characterized by epic brotherhood; hit and run ambushes, relaying information to Cairo via wireless, keeping the Germans on edge were their normal assignments. They relaxed from their life of danger in the traditional Cretan pastimes — drinking the potent *tsikoudia*, singing *rizitika* ballads, and dancing to the Cretan *lyra*. Many of the heroic songs recorded deal with the adventures of these bands.

Immediately upon alighting the British officers began to organize the abduction. The story, as it unfolds in Captain Moss' account in *Ill-Met by Moonlight*,<sup>6</sup> begins with Capetan Bourdzalis, whom Moss dubbed "Wallace Beery," that unforgettable character of the films. A great patriot, he gave valuable assistance to British agents who were operating in the island. "He stands a good six feet high, has massive shoulders, a comfortable paunch, and walks with a fine piratical swagger," wrote Moss. "Since the German invasion he has taken to the mountains and set himself up as the leader of a band of guerrillas . . . There is something of Falstaff about Bourdzalis. Before embarking on his luncheon he crossed himself and gave an enormous belch at the same moment; and then, disdaining to use a fork he stuck his formidable dagger into a piece of meat and started to eat from it."<sup>7</sup> This picturesque character was to organize and lead a reserve force to deal with any emergency that might beset the smaller guerrilla band of ten led by Manoli Pateraki, a herdsman from Koustoyerako.

The success of the abduction depended upon a careful study of General Kreipe's schedule, which he carried out with Prussian precision. At 9:00 A.M. he left his house, Sir Arthur Evans' famed "Villa Ariadne" at Knossos, and went to his working headquarters in the nearby village of Ano Arkhanais. He returned to the villa at 1:00 P.M. for luncheon; at 4:00 P.M. he drove to his headquarters and returned for dinner at the villa at 8:00 or 8:30. These movements were carefully observed by a partisan who lived next door to Kreipe's villa. A Cretan high school youth concentrated on acquiring an intimate knowledge of the general's staff car so that he could recognize its shadow in the dark and the sound of its engine. The abduction was planned to take place at night at the crossroads where the sloping road from Ano Arkhanais meets the

<sup>6</sup>W. Stanley Moss, *Ill Met by Moonlight* (New York 1950).

<sup>7</sup>Ibid. 42.

Houdetsi-Heraklion road, a junction which compels a car to slow down almost to a standstill. There is a ditch on either side of this road sufficiently deep to conceal the guerrilla band. The partisan and the high school youth strung a wire along the ditch leading to the crossroads. By means of this wire they were to buzz an electric bell and flicker a flashlight at the approach of the general's car. At the crossroads the two British officers, dressed as German traffic police, were ready to signal the general's car to stop. At the fateful moment the bell rang, the flashlight flicked, the guerrillas tensed for action. The general's chauffeur on approaching the intersection slowed down. Major Fermor shouted "Halt!" and approaching the side of the car asked, "Ist dies das Generals Wagen?" There came a muffled "Ja, ja," from inside. Then hell broke loose. There was a rush from all sides; the doors of the car were thrown open and the flashlight illuminated the bewildered face of the general, the terrified eyes of the chauffeur, who reached for his automatic but was rendered unconscious by the butt of a pistol. Moss jumped behind the steering wheel while Fermor and Manoli dragged the general out of the opposite door cursing at the top of his voice. The general was put in the back seat with three guerrillas, one of whom held his knife to the general's throat while the other two aimed their guns out of either window. Fermor took the general's cap and posed as the general in the front seat beside Moss. The rest of the guerrillas took the chauffeur on their long trek to the rendezvous on Psilorites. The car, a new Opel, its gasoline tank fortunately full, started for Heraklion. The general, assured that he would be treated as a prisoner of war, calmed down with a "Danke, danke."

Then began the spine-tingling business of passing through the many traffic control posts. Coolly Moss slowed down each time so as to give the sentry an opportunity to see the general's pennants on the fenders. Each time at the sight of the general's pennants the sentry would either give a smart salute or present arms as the crossbar was lifted and the car passed through. Thus they passed through a crowded Heraklion and the last of the control posts on the shore road leading to Rethymno. At a quarter past eleven they arrived at a post on the road where the car was abandoned along the beach with a note to the German authorities that the affair was carried out by the British, so that there would be no civilian reprisals. The

abduction party then headed on foot toward the high villages of Mt. Ida, sleeping in caves by day, travelling by night to elude the ever-present planes overhead. They eventually eluded all the cordons of the frantic Germans and made their way to Rodakino on the south coast of the island where a waiting British submarine carried the general to cordial captivity in Cairo. The event electrified the island; it made good war-copy; it appealed to the Cretan taste for humor and dash. Thereafter, until the war's end the Germans, after a reprisal of burning villages and executing civilians, behaved like a besieged army. Thus was accomplished the *Doloneia* of World War II.

The following is a summary of the version of this episode as it appears in the singer's recorded version. After a prologue in the traditional manner of Cretan epics, the bard launches into the tale. An order comes from British and American headquarters in Cairo to capture General Kreipe, dead or alive. The motive is revenge for his cruelty to the Cretans. A Cretan partisan, Lefteris Tambakis (not one of the actual guerrilla band) appears before the English general (Fermor and Moss are combined into one and elevated in rank) and volunteers for the dangerous mission. The general reads the order and the hero accepts the mission for the honor of Cretan arms. The hero goes to Heraklion, where he hears that a beautiful Cretan girl is the secretary of General Kreipe. In disguise the partisan proceeds to her house and in her absence reads the general's order to her mother. When the girl returns he again reads the general's order. Telling her the honor of Crete depends on her, he catalogues the German cruelties. If she would help in the mission, her name would become immortal in Cretan history. The girl consents and asks for three days time in which to perform her role. To achieve Cretan honor she sacrifices her woman's honor with General Kreipe in the role of a spy. She gives to the hero General Kreipe's plans for the next day. Our hero then goes to Knossos to meet the guerrillas and the English general. "Yiassou, General," he says. "I will perform the mission." The guerrillas go to Arkhanais to get a long car with which to blockade the road. Our hero, mounted on a horse by the side of the blockading car awaits the car of Kaiseri (that is what he calls Kreipe). The English general orders the pistols to be ready. When Kreipe's car slows

down at the turn, he is at once attacked by the guerrillas. Kreipe is stripped of his uniform (only his cap in the actual event) and begs mercy for the sake of his children (a stock motif in Cretan poetry). After the capture the frantic Germans begin the hunt with dogs (airplanes in the actual event). The guerrillas start on the trek to Mt. Ida and by stages the party reaches the district of Sfakia (the home of the singer and his audience; actually the general left the island southwest of Mt. Ida). The guards have to protect the general from the mob of enraged Sfakians. Soon the British submarine arrives and takes the general to Egypt. Cretan *lyras* ring out with joy while people dance; Hitler is now sure to lose the war, for his favorite general is ignominiously captured — pride goes before a fall. Our bard concludes the poem with a traditional epilogue — that never before in the history of the world has such a deed been done. He then gives his name, his village, his service to his country.

At the conclusion of the recording I took off my ear-phones, congratulated him on his good story, the irony of which escaped him, and asked him about his sources for the story. He had told me, in an earlier account of his life for my notebook, that he had been in a wounded veterans' hospital in Athens during the occupation of Crete. He replied that a fellow-Cretan had told him the plot of the story while he was in the hospital and that he improvised the tale for me to fulfill his obligation of Cretan hospitality.

There is no oral heroic poem collected by folklorists which approximates the quality of the Homeric epics. This tale, like many others in the heroic traditions of modern nations, is a far cry from the genius of Homer. Yet it offers us what protozoa offer the biologist, valuable insights with which to face the more complex problems of Homer. We see in it, for example, the metamorphosis of the facts of history into myth only nine years after the event. Nor is my bard alone responsible for myth-making. My Cretan guide in the villages of Mt. Ida, who played a significant role in the resistance movement, in telling me the tale of the capture of General Kreipe added dramatic details from other hearsay accounts which render the story folklore. When this instance of myth is added to the many others studied by Lord Raglan in *The Hero*.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Lord Raglan, *The Hero; a Study in Tradition, Myth, and Drama* (New York 1937).

we can readily imagine the transformations in the Achaeans heroes by the time they reached Homer in the eighth century.

Our bard illustrates the basic fact of folklore: the tale is adjusted to the audience and not to history. History as transmuted to epic and folklore is like the wine drunk by those who consulted the Oracle of Bac-buq in Rabelais — it tasted different in accordance with the imagination of those who drank it. Our tale makes a hodge-podge of history, even as Homer does in conflating Mycenaean and Geometric periods of culture. As bronze and iron weapons exist side by side in Homer, so do the blockading car and the mounted horse at the crossroads. Helen of Troy has long been suspected by historians as an example of the poet's prerogative of interpolating in terms of human interest the *how* to the *what* of history. Our Cretan heroine is obviously the creation of a male mentality in storytelling which, ever since Homer and Hesiod, interprets history in terms of *cherchez la femme*. Helen emerges as a spy adjusted to the needs of the tale. Furthermore, our singer ever adjusts the facts to the requirements of local Sfakian pride. The hero is a Sfakian, though not one of the members of the actual abduction party. Sfakians play no second fiddle to any Cretan, much less to the British, whose role is played down in the poem. General Kreipe is led to Sfakia in order that the singer's fellow villagers may be afforded a chance to leap at the tyrant. The episode is motivated by the basic Cretan code of revenge, which is momentarily frustrated by the arrival of the submarine. The only nucleus of history remaining in the poem are the facts that the general was abducted and taken away in a submarine; the rest is fiction.

When the poem of our bard is set against the many other tales recorded in Crete, we note a change and a difference. It differed from the other traditional heroic tales which were recorded even by the same singer. Here the singer was breaking away from his tradition and adjusting his tale to a newer world. His originality is seen primarily in the introduction of the Cretan heroine and the role she plays. In none of the many heroic tales from Cretan oral epics is there any room for women except to lament the hero's death. We see Helen and Briseis in such a role, weeping over the bodies of Hector and Patroclus respectively. The presence of the

Cretan heroine in our tale might be explained simply: that is how our singer heard the story of Kreipe from his informant in the hospital at Athens and that is how he sings it. This is the way singers of heroic tales work; our singer is no exception.

But an analysis of the spy role in the poem leads us to an interesting trail. The fame of Mata Hari (Gertrude Margarete Zelle), the dancer of the French stage who was executed as a spy by the French in 1917, spread widely after World War I and acquired romantic interest as the result of newspaper and magazine accounts and a popular American film on the subject. It reached even Greece and Crete and now enters as a new motif in Cretan poetry. Our Cretan heroine's spy role is modelled after Mata Hari. We see emerging the influence and contribution of the contemporary world to the oral tradition. Our oral bard is adjusting to a newer world, one in which woman outgrows her traditional role of merely lamenting the dead.

In dealing with his contemporary world our bard adheres in the main to the basic tradition of the Cretan hero in poetry — the traditional prologue and epilogue, the use of traditional formulae, type-scenes like the hero on a horse, a letter read over and over again like speeches reported in Homer. Yet he also modifies the tradition by introducing new formulae, arising from changes in warfare; airplanes become "birds of war," old formulae yield to automatic weapons, telephones and wireless. Thus the oral tradition adjusts itself to deal with the contemporary. Scholars have long suspected from an analysis of his poems that such was the case with Homer, too.

Our singer, finally, has one more contribution to make to our understanding of the epic. Poor as his poem may seem to us, he has much to tell about the technique of oral poetry. How was he able to improvise a tale almost the length of one of the shorter books of the *Odyssey*? Parry has given a full account of this method in the case of Homer.<sup>9</sup> Our bard corroborates his explanation. He stands at the tail-end of a long tradition of heroic poetry in Sfakia which goes back at least as far as *The Song of Daskaloyiannes*, the epic on the destruction of Sfakia in the revolt of 1770. He is

<sup>9</sup>For bibliography see *AIA* 52 (1948) 43-44.

not a professional bard, an oral virtuoso, as was Homer. Our bard was a worker of the fields indulging in heroic song from sheer love of the tradition. His remarkable facility in improvisation was cultivated from learning the songs of older men. My notebooks reveal that he heard many from a blind singer in Askephou. From these and others he acquired a vocabulary of oral formulae, phrases extending from part of a line to a line to an entire group of lines. Some of these formulae go back to the Byzantine oral ballads on Digenes Akritas, others to folksongs, to *rizitika* ballads which are sung at every social occasion in these villages. Furthermore, our singer was able to improvise facilely by reason of a long ingrained practice of improvising on social occasions fresh distichs called *mantinades*.<sup>10</sup> One hears these distichs everywhere in Crete and in the other Greek islands. Children learn to improvise them and continue in this practice the rest of their lives. Such is the range of the oral tradition that made possible his song. He does not memorize; he can when need arises create new formulae by analogy with older formulae. Such is the practice of the oral technique met in the study of all surviving traditions of heroic poetry.

My notebooks reveal also some precious facts which never emerge from arm-chair scholarship. His answer to a question about the relation of the music of the verse to the formulae revealed that our singer, like others, was unaware of what we call metres. When asked how he knew that he had come to the end of the fifteen syllable line (the basic measure of his verse), he replied naively, "I didn't know the line has fifteen syllables. I don't count syllables, I feel them — it's the melody that shapes the lines." He relied on the basic melody of the line to aid him in organizing his phrases and formulae into verse. Such too may have been the role of Homer's "bloomin' lyre."

It is in ways like these that recent scholarship in Homer is seeking answers to questions often insoluble by traditional techniques of literary scholarship.

TRINITY COLLEGE  
May 1960

<sup>10</sup>Cf. S. Baud-Bovy, *La Chanson populaire grecque du Dodécanèse* (Paris 1936) 313-394.



